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## THE DATE OF THE B-TEXT OF *PIERS PLOWMAN*

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### I

#### LANGLAND AND THE FRIARS

Reading through the B-text in Skeat's edition with an eye to the contemporary controversy between the friars and the secular clergy, I was surprised to note how sharp is the difference between Langland's criticism of the friars in the A-text and the very much more polemical tone of the B-text. There is no need to recall the amusing satire of the earlier poem. The friars are held up to ridicule, but not more effectively than the pardoners, absentee parsons or worldly-minded prelates. In the B-text there is a new complaint: that the friars are not true to their profession of poverty, but interfere in work that is proper to the secular clergy—absolving, preaching, burying. Criticisms of this new type will be found in *Passus* V. 143-52; X. 71-7; XI. 53-82; XIII. 1-13; XV. 68-79. They are, of course, the traditional grievances of the secular clergy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The odd fact is that they should be present in the B-text, but absent from the A-text. For the quarrel between the friars and the clergy was never more acute in England than in the years 1356-60, when Langland must have been meditating the substance of his first satire on contemporary life.<sup>1</sup>

I have noted only one direct allusion in the A-text to this famous controversy which disturbed the peace of clerical life in England and France, and was ended—for a time at least—by the death of Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh and self-constituted champion of the clergy, who died in exile at Avignon towards the end of 1360. The passage occurs in the

<sup>1</sup> For this controversy see my summary in *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif* (Oxford, 1940), 80-89.

Prologue to the A-text (56-64), where Langland is attacking the mendicant friars for their greed and worldly standards of life:

I font there Freris, all the foure ordres,  
Preching the peple for profyt of heore wombes,  
Glosynge the gospel as hem good liketh:  
For couetyse of copes construeth hit ille.

The satire continues for some verses. Then Langland interrupts his attack to sound a note of warning:

Mony ferlyes hath bi-falle in a fewe zeris.  
But holychirche bi-ginne holde bet to-gedere,  
The moste mischeef on molde mounteth vp faste.

Far from taking sides for or against the friars in their strife with the clergy, Langland seems here to be more concerned with the peace of Holy Church. FitzRalph's attacks on the friars, their vigorous counter-attacks and the bitter polemics that could be heard from so many pulpits in London: these are no doubt some of the 'mony ferlyes' that have befallen in the past few years. If peace be not better observed by both parties in this dispute, the poet sees nothing but trouble ahead.

Advocates of multiple authorship may perhaps be inclined to cite this change of attitude in the B-text as proof of their thesis. But it is obvious that the poet's mind may have been changed by longer experience of this disedifying controversy—and, very specially, of the controversialists. For Langland is everywhere personal in his judgments of the contemporary scene. What may have happened to him in the years that lie between the composition of the *Visio*, when memories of Malvern were still fresh in his experience of life, and the more elaborate version of the *Visio* and *Vita* in the B-text, with its almost exclusively London background?

I was asking myself these questions when a friend lent me a copy of Miss Marcett's recent essay on Uhtred of Boldon and William Jordan.<sup>1</sup> The defects of that small volume are only too obvious to the most casual reader. But Miss Marcett has made one notable contribution to the literature about *Piers Plowman*. So far as I know, she is the first to suggest that the gluttonous friar who dines with Conscience in the opening scene of Passus XIII is to be identified as William Jordan, a restless Dominican controversialist of these years. That Langland is here attacking some personal enemy is probable from the vivid portrait of this 'maistre' with his gluttonous appetite, his eagerness for argument and his overbearing manner. I had myself gone carefully through the passage on the chance of being able to identify the 'maistre' with one or other of the Austin friars

<sup>1</sup> Mildred Elizabeth Marcett: *Uhtred de Boldon, Friar William Jordan and 'Piers Plowman'* (Published by the Author: New York, 1938). I owe my knowledge of this essay to Rev. T. P. Dunning, C.M., who is working on the problem of Langland's views concerning the salvation of the good heathen.

who were active in the politics of London in the 'sixties and 'seventies of this century; but I had found no clue. Miss Marcett has been very much more successful, though her arguments need to be picked out of a tangle of inaccurate statements.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Marcett's main argument rests on the interpretation of two allusions that have escaped the notice of earlier commentators. In XIII. 83-4 Langland writes:

I shal iangle to þis Iurdan with his iuste wombe,  
To telle me what penaunce is, of which he preched rather.

*Iurdon* or *Jordan* is a chamber-pot, as has been explained by the editors of the *Promptorium Parvulorum*; and *iuste* is an old word for 'pot'. Skeat has noted these meanings in his commentary, but Miss Marcett adds the suggestion that there may be here a pun on the proper name Jordan. The verses obviously gain new point if Langland is hitting at some friar, well known to his audience, whose pot-bellied figure is as familiar as his name Jordan. Miss Marcett has also been able to show that Langland has prepared his audience for this sudden allusion. For in XIII. 65-70 he alludes to a sermon that the friar had preached quite recently from the pulpit of St. Paul's:

It is nouȝt foure days þat þis freke bifor þe den of poules  
Preched of penaunces þat poule þe apostle suffred  
In fame et frigore and flappes of scourges:  
Ter cesus sum & a iudeis quinquies quadragenas, &c.

But the poet complains that this friar, like all his brethren, was careful to pass lightly over one text:

Ac o worde þei ouerhuppen at ech a tyme þat þei preche,  
Þat poule in his pistol to al þe peple tolde:  
*Periculum est in falsis fratribus.*

Now this is the very text that Uhtred of Boldon had used as the starting-point of his attack on the friars in a pamphlet that is usually cited as his *Contra querelas fratrum*. We know that the learned monk of Durham wrote this pamphlet in self-defence about the year 1366, and we know also that Uhtred's principal opponent at Oxford was a Dominican friar named William Jordan, who was involved in several public controversies between the years 1355 and 1367. Miss Marcett has thus made out a good *prima facie* case for her proposed identification, and all that we know of Jordan's activities during these twelve years confirms Langland's unflattering portrait.

That portrait is indeed so vivid that we feel Langland must have been describing a man whom his hearers would have no trouble in recognizing.

<sup>1</sup> Since the evidence is exceedingly complicated, I have relegated it to a separate section at the end of this essay: below, pp. 19 ff.

In fancy one can almost see Friar William Jordan, pot-bellied and quarrelsome, robed as a Dominican master of theology, as he mounts the most famous of London's pulpits, delivers his text and then passes easily—but with what vehemence!—to a narrative of his own sufferings at the hands of his many adversaries: his wanderings overseas in defence of the truth, the penances and imprisonment that he has endured, the blows he has received 'in fame et frigore and flappes of scourges'. But the fancy suggests a date that calls for some revision of the commonly accepted chronology of *Piers Plowman*. William Jordan is last heard of in our extant records in 1368, and there is reason to believe that he was dead (or at least out of action as a preacher) before 1374.<sup>1</sup> I shall now examine some other indications which have convinced me that the last eight Passus of the B-text (XIII–XX), which form a single dramatic unity within the larger poem, were most probably composed not later than 1370–72—several years before the commonly accepted date (1377).

## II

## PASSUS XIII–XX OF THE B-TEXT

In XIII. 172–6 the 'doctour' interrupts a dialogue between Conscience and Patience who have been arguing that Charity will preserve us all from harm:

'It is but a dido', quod þis doctour, 'a dysoures tale.  
'Al þe witt of þis worlde and wizte mennes strengthe  
'can nouȝt confourmen a pees bytwene þe pope and his enemys,  
'Ne bitwene two cristene kynges can no wizte pees make,  
'Profitable to ayther peple . . .'

In January 1369 the Black Prince formally violated the terms of the Treaty of Calais (1360), and war was resumed between the Kings of France and England. Early in 1370 the citizens of Rome leagued themselves with the citizens of Perugia in opposition to Urban V, who had returned to Rome from Avignon in the autumn of 1367. Things went so badly for the papal forces that the Pope left Italy for France in September 1370; he died at Avignon on 19 December of the same year. Langland's verses reflect the general sense of disappointment in England—and indeed throughout all Europe.

In XIII. 243–9 Langland complains of a more personal disappointment:

I fynde payne for þe pope and prouendre for his palfrey,  
And I hadde neuere of hym, haue god my treuthe,  
Noither prouendre ne parsonage ȝut of þe popis ȝifte,  
Saue a pardoun with a peys of led and two pollis amydde.

Urban V died at the end of 1370. The eight years of his pontificate had been notable for his generous patronage of scholars and university men all

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 23 f.



over Europe, and the printed volume of the English *Calendar of Papal Petitions* contains long lists of grants and benefices given, by order of the Pope, in answer to more or less deserving appeals from English 'Rome-runners'. Langland had thus some reason for his disappointment at this time.

He continues (XIII. 247-9):

Hadde iche a clerke þat couthe write, I wolde caste hym a bille,  
þat he sent me vnder his seel a salue for þe pestilence,  
And þat his blessing & his bulles bocches miȝte destroye:

*In nomine meo demonia eicient, & super egros manus imponent & bene habebunt.*

Skeat suggests that these verses allude to the pestilence of 1376. But it was an age when plagues were all too frequent, and there was a severe visitation in 1369 which numbered England's Queen among its victims.

Less than twenty verses after this allusion to the pestilence comes the well-known description of the drought that visited London city 'in a drye Apprile, A thousande and thre hondreth, tweis thretty & ten . . . whan Chichestre was Maire' (XIII. 265-71). Here there is no doubt at all. The allusion is to the drought of April 1370, when John Chichester is known to have been mayor of London. This undoubted allusion to 1370 strengthens the argument for the earlier allusions in this same passage.

I have found no allusions to contemporary history in Passus XIV, but Passus XV has many passages that show us Langland's sympathy for the mendicant ideal if only the friars were faithful to their own traditions. In XV. 225, for example, he admits that Charity was once found 'in a freres frokke'. But not in his own day:

Ac it is ferre agoo in seynt Fraunceys tyme:  
In þat secte sitthe to selde hath he be knowen.

Again in XV. 313-24 the poet admits that money left to the friars is more likely to reach the poor than if it be left to some monks or canons. But he complains bitterly elsewhere (XV. 411-5) that the friars take alms from the rich and neglect their ministry among the poor; and in XV. 68-72 he names the friars as masters who, more than any others, teach useless learning in place of the Ten Commandments and the Seven Deadly Sins.

Another central theme of this Passus is the problem of the conversion and salvation of the heathen. Here the contemporary background is obscure, but enough is known to make it certain that Langland's verses reflect ideas that were common in his day. The poet's concern for the infidel is expressed very forcibly in XV. 484-90:

Allas! þat men so longe on Makometh shulde byleue,  
So many prelates to preche as þe Pope maketh,  
Of Nazareth, of Nynyue, of Neptalim and damaske:

Pat þei ne went as cryst wisseth, sithen þei wilne a name,  
 To be pastours and preche þe passioun of Ihesus,  
 And as hym-self seyde, so to lyue and deye:  
*Bonus pastor animam suam ponit, &c.*

These verses are followed by a digression on the wealth of the Church and the worship of money. But Langland returns to the heathen in XV. 537-57, where the original version of the B-text has been obscured by a later addition of eighteen lines (539-56):

And a peril to þe pope and prelatis pat he maketh,  
 Pat bere bisshopes names of Bedleem & babiloigne:  
 Pat hippe aboute in Englonde to halwe mennes auteres,  
 And crepe amonges curatoures and confessen ageyne þe lawe:  
*Nolite mittere falcem in messem alienam, &c.*

It will be noted that the missions here named all lie in what we now call the Near East: Nazareth, Niniveh, Damascus, Bethlehem and Babylon. Mendicant friars had been active in these parts from the thirteenth century onwards, and the Friars Minor had been especially prominent in the mission of the Holy Land.<sup>1</sup> They had also won their greatest success in the famous mission to Tartary, and Franciscan missionaries were still active in what we now call Mongolia and China in Langland's day. But Langland is here repeating names that recall the Dominican mission to Armenia, Persia, Georgia and the Crimea; and we must look both to Franciscan and Dominican records for light on the meaning of these verses in *Piers Plowman*.

As early as 1313 a chapter general of the Dominican order which was held at Metz decreed that all priors provincial should be careful not to promote any of the brethren to 'vagabond' bishoprics (*ad titulos vagos episcopatum*) since such promotions were bringing the order into disrepute.<sup>2</sup> This decree was renewed by the chapter general that met at London in 1314, and similar legislation was continued for some years. We may be sure that the Friars Preachers were not the only order to suffer from this abuse of restless and ambitious friars who sought non-residential bishoprics as a means of escaping from the constraint of religious discipline. English episcopal registers for these years furnish abundant evidence in support of Langland's satire.<sup>3</sup> But the known examples of 'vagabond'

<sup>1</sup> There is a mass of biographical detail about these Franciscan missionaries in G. Golubovich: *Biblioteca Bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell' Oriente francescano*. 5 vols. (Quaracchi-Florence, 1906-). But the volumes hitherto published contain nothing on the latter half of the fourteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> R. Loenertz, O.P., in *Archivum Fratrum Predicatorum* III. (1933), 15; quoting from the decrees of the chapters as printed in *Monumenta Ordinis Predicatorum Historica*, (Rome) IV. 63; 72.

<sup>3</sup> Stubbs: *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum* (Oxford, 1897), 196-7, where a list is given of such names as occur in the episcopal registers. In what follows I use the term 'suffragan' in the loose sense that was common in the Middle Ages, and as it is used here by Stubbs. His notes can sometimes be completed from the lists in Eubel: *Hierarchia Catholica Medii Aevi*, I (Münster, 1913).

missionary bishops occur for the most part within twenty years of the Black Death.

A characteristic case is mentioned in the register of John de Grandisson, bishop of Exeter (1327-69) under the date 7 August 1347.<sup>1</sup> An Austin friar named Hugh had been consecrated (the date is not known) as archbishop of Damascus and appears in the York registers as suffragan during the years 1344-52. In March 1344/5 he journeyed from Cambridge to the city of Exeter, and consecrated a cemetery of the Austin friars at Dartmouth within Grandisson's diocese, but without the bishop's leave. Grandisson was no friend of the friars. He summoned Hugh to appear before the archbishop's court in Canterbury, where (after a delay of two years) he was compelled to acknowledge his fault and ask pardon of the bishop of Exeter.

Archbishop Hugh is not likely to have crossed Langland's path, but a Franciscan archbishop of Nazareth named Richard, who was consecrated at Avignon on 10 October 1348, appears as a suffragan of Canterbury in 1349. He acted as suffragan in Worcester in 1350; in London and Ely in 1361; and is known to have assisted at the consecration of the bishops of Menevia and Rochester in 1362.<sup>2</sup> He was dead before 28 January 1366, when his successor was consecrated at Avignon. Here is a prelate whom Langland may easily have seen in London. And an archbishop of Damascus named Gregory appears in England as an assistant prelate in 1370. Two of the missionary sees named by Langland in *Passus XV.* 486 are thus accounted for.

Hereford, Langland's own diocese, seems to have had more than its fair share of such wandering prelates at this time. Thomas, formerly a Cistercian monk of Mereval, acted as suffragan during a vacancy in Hereford in 1361. He appears also as suffragan in Lichfield (1360), Llandaff (1361) and York (1365). He is given the title 'episcopus Magnatiensis', but this see can no longer be identified. In 1370 an Austin friar named Robert Worksop, who had been consecrated bishop of Prishtina in Albania ('Prissinensis') in 1363, acted as suffragan during another vacancy in Hereford; he was also suffragan in the neighbouring diocese of Worcester during a longer vacancy (1373-5).<sup>3</sup> Courtenay became bishop of Hereford in 1370, and we find that he was helped by a suffragan named John Ware in 1371. But Ware was not an absentee missionary prelate. He had been consecrated in 1355 to assist Grandisson, now an old man, in the administration of Exeter, and he remained as suffragan in Exeter for more than thirty years (1355-86).

On the whole it would seem that the activities of these 'vagabond'

<sup>1</sup> *Grandisson's Register*, ed. Hingeston-Randolph, II (1897), 1027-31. The details of this escapade are most curious. <sup>2</sup> Stubbs, 196; Eubel I, 359. <sup>3</sup> Stubbs, 196; Eubel I, 409.

missionary prelates were most common in the years immediately following the Black Death. The register of Ralph, of Shrewsbury, bishop of Bath and Wells (1329-63), contains a curious entry under the date 16 July 1362.<sup>1</sup> The bishop, now an old man, orders his archdeacon not to permit any bishop to exercise episcopal functions with the exception of John de Langebrugge, a Franciscan friar who had been consecrated bishop of Budua in Dalmatia, and who was the lawfully appointed suffragan of Wells. The bishop alleges as reason for his mandate 'the abuses of men who call themselves bishops and who have exercised episcopal functions in our diocese without any commission from us, conferring tonsure and the minor orders, consecrating chalices and altar-stones and blessing ecclesiastical vestments for the sake of worldly gain'.

Few names of absentee missionary prelates occur after 1370 in the list compiled by Stubbs from the surviving registers. But one instance is worth noting for its London associations. John, 'episcopus Ayobanensis' (an unknown title), appears as an assistant prelate at Canterbury in 1370, having been consecrated to his puzzling see on 30 March 1369.<sup>2</sup> He was still alive on 14 March 1380, when he was 'living in the hermitage within Cripplegate in London'. On that date he made his will, which was proved on 18 March 1381; his will included the provision that his body should be buried at Stratford. It would be pleasant to know more of this hermit-bishop in London, who died (presumably at Cripplegate) just before the disaster of the Peasants' Revolt.

Apart from this last name, all the known cases of 'vagabond' missionary prelates in England suggest a date not later than 1370 as the time when Langland's satire would have been most effective. If Archbishop Richard of Nazareth is the prelate whom Langland had chiefly in mind—and his litany of titles in *partibus infidelium* begins with Nazareth—then we are brought back to a date as early as 1361-5. Langland was certainly living in London at that date, and Richard was active in London and the neighbouring dioceses in 1361-2. Langland's own diocese of Hereford was administered by an absentee missionary prelate in 1361, and again in 1370; and Robert Worksop, the Augustinian friar who administered Hereford in 1370, was active in Chichester, York, Hereford and Worcester from 1363-75. These dates fit well with the other indications I have noted in this part of the B-text.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Wilkins, *Concilia* III. 49; Stubbs 196; Eubel I. 150. John's successor as bishop of Budua acted as suffragan to the archbishop of Mainz from 1379 onwards (Eubel, loc. cit.)

<sup>2</sup> Stubbs, 197.

## III

## LANGLAND AND JOHN OF LEOMINSTER

There is another episode in the missionary history of these years that deserves to be recorded as a possible influence on Langland's poem. In the first quarter of the fourteenth century the Dominican friars had been so successful in their missions to Armenia and Persia that a special congregation of 'Pilgrim Brethren' (*Societas Fratrum Peregrinancium pro Christo*) was organised as a means of ensuring permanent recruitment for these mission-fields.<sup>1</sup> The movement flourished for the first half of the century, but came to premature ruin in the devastations of the Black Death. A bull of Clement VI, dated 6 March 1349, summarises the calamities that had been reported to the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> No more than three Dominican missionaries were alive in Armenia and Persia at that date; every one of a small group of missionary bishops had died at his post within the past few years; and the few Armenian priests whom the friars had reconciled to the Roman communion were not sufficient to ensure the survival of the Latin mission. Clement VI made an effort to save what could be saved. He nominated the vicar general of the 'Pilgrim Brethren'—an Italian friar named John Lunbello—as archbishop of Sultanieh in Persia, and gave him two other Italian friars as his suffragans at Tiflis and Dehikerkan. These suffragan bishops were duly consecrated at Avignon, but it seems certain that they never left Europe for the East.

All this may seem very remote from Langland and *Piers Plowman*; but one name occurs in the story that brings us much nearer home. When the surviving friars in Armenia sent a messenger to Avignon in 1348, they chose as their spokesman an English friar named John of Leominster (*fr. Johannes de Leomestria* or *Leoministria*), who had been working in the East for the past fifteen years. Leominster lies in Hereford, not more than a few miles from Ledbury and Malvern; and the name suggests at once the possibility of some personal contact between the poet and the friar. Dates are here important, though our evidence is far from perfect.

John of Leominster is first heard of in 1332-3, when he and another Dominican friar, Brother James of Georgia, were at the papal court in Avignon seeking guidance as to the orthodoxy of certain doctrines.<sup>3</sup> Similar missions from the Near East were common in this century; they were an inevitable sequel to the constant efforts made by the Avignon

<sup>1</sup> For what follows see R. Loenertz, O.P.: *La Société des Frères Prêcheurs: Etude sur l'Orient dominicain* (Rome, 1937); and Mortier: *Histoire des Maîtres Généraux de l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs* III (Paris, 1907), 320-34; 442-53.

<sup>2</sup> Loenertz, *op. cit.* 194-5.

<sup>3</sup> His name appears in K. H. Schäfer; *Die Ausgaben der apost. Kammer unter Johann XXII* (Paderborn, 1911), 544. The purpose of his commission is there defined: 'pro habendo declarationem super aliquibus punctis fidei'.



Popes to secure the submission and reunion of these distant churches. John of Leominster may have been on the Armenian mission before 1332, but there is no evidence as to his movements before that year. He and his companion spent almost two years at the papal court, but John was finally granted a viaticum of forty florins for his journey to the Holy Land (*ad partes ultramarinas in Iherosolima*) on 22 July 1334.<sup>1</sup> He seems to have been in the East for the next fifteen years, for he is next heard of as the messenger who is charged with the mission of obtaining from the Pope the consecration of new missionary bishops in 1349.<sup>2</sup> Clement VI's bull, by which John Lunbello was provided to the see of Sultanieh, commissions John of Leominster to carry the *pallium* from Avignon to the new archbishop. This detail implies that John Lunbello, who was vicar general of the 'Pilgrim Brethren' in Armenia and Persia, had remained on his mission-field whilst the English friar was sent as messenger to the papal court. At this point in the story both John Lunbello and John of Leominster disappear from view. The new archbishop probably died soon after his provision, for he has left no further trace of his activities. John of Leominster may have gone East with the *pallium*, but even so much is not certain. The journey from France to Armenia may have been judged impossible in the confusion of that dreadful year. But John had come to Avignon from the East, and it seems probable that he would return there.

Did he die at his post at some unknown date? Or did he come back to England, either in 1349-50 or some years later? Did Langland, whose home near Malvern was also so near Leominster, meet him or hear of him? It is, of course, possible that John of Leominster was provided to some missionary see *in partibus infidelium*, and that he ended his life as one of those non-residential missionary bishops of whom Langland is thinking in the verses I have quoted. But no record has survived of his consecration, nor is there any hint (so far as I know) in our extant sources that a Dominican Bishop named John was working in England, like Archbishop Richard of Nazareth, in these years. I like to think that John of Leominster came back to England as a simple friar, a veteran from the mission-fields of Armenia and Persia; and that Langland perhaps owes to him some of that preoccupation with the problem of the conversion of the heathen which is so marked in the B-text. But, if this be true, the new influence would seem to have been later than 1363, for there is no trace of it in the earlier A-text.

Whatever the personal contribution of Brother John of Leominster to

<sup>1</sup> Schäfer, op. cit. 801.

<sup>2</sup> It is very tempting to identify John of Leominster with another English Dominican friar, John of Swinford (*Sovinneforth*) who appears in Armenia not later than 1337. He and a Spanish friar named Peter of Aragon were then engaged on the work of translating the Roman missal and breviary into Armenian: Loenertz, op. cit. 144. Another English friar named Richard the Englishman can be traced in the Crimea c. 1333: *ibid.* 127-9.



this curious passage in Langland's poem, one point is worth noting for our immediate purpose. If Langland did in fact write the last eight Passus of the B-text c. 1370-72, he was writing them at a time when the Dominican mission to Armenia and Persia had been officially abandoned. For the collapse of the work that the friars had organised in these countries was, for a period of some twenty years, almost complete. Thanks to the efforts of some Armenian converts whom the Friars Preachers had organised as 'United Brethren of Gregory the Illuminator', the Armenian mission at least survived into better days. But no recruits came from Europe for more than twenty years after the Black Death, and a chapter general of the order, meeting at Magdeburg in 1363, decreed the official suppression of the *Societas Fratrum Peregrinancium*.<sup>1</sup> Its work was not resumed until 1374, when Gregory XI at the urgent entreaty of the Armenian Christians, ordered the Friars Preachers to resume their missions in the Near East. Once again, the known facts of contemporary history fit well with the date that I have assumed for the composition of the B-text.

## IV

## ALLUSIONS TO CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

Let us return to Passus XV, where Langland has been lamenting the failure to convert the heathen. His harangue on this theme is suddenly interrupted by an impassioned protest against the modern worship of wealth (XV. 501-29):

And now is routhe to rede how þe red noble  
Is reuerenced or þe Rode, receyued for þe worthier  
Pan crystes crosse þat ouer-cam deþ and dedly synne.

The poet recalls the fall of the Templars, who also had worshipped the cross that is engraven on the groat rather than the Cross of Christ:

For coueityse of þat crosse men of holykirke  
Shal tourne as templeres did: þe tyme approcheth faste.

His words of warning become more and more stern (XV. 513-4):

Riȝt so, ȝe clerkes, for ȝowre coueityse ar longe  
Shal þei demen *dos ecclesie* and ȝowre pride depose:  
*Deposuit potentes de sede, &c.*

There follows the well-known passage on the poison that has come to the Church through Constantine's Donation (XV. 519-29), and the poet's final appeal to the lords of England:

Take her landes, ȝe lordes, and let hem lyue by dymes.  
If possessioun be poysoun & inparfit hem make,  
Good were to dischargen hem for holicherche sake.

<sup>1</sup> The story of this suppression and the restoration in 1374-5 has been studied in great detail by Father Loenertz in *Arch. Ff. Pred.* III (1933), 1-55.

Were these lines written, as has commonly been assumed, in the heat of the crisis of 1376-7 when Wyclif had published his *De Civili Dominio*? Or are they an anticipation of Wyclif's attack, put into verse by the London poet when tempers were beginning to rise some years earlier? The choice of dates is not easy. This whole passage (XV. 505-29) is in fact a digression, interrupting the main argument about the Church's mission to the heathen which is resumed at XV. 530. We shall see that Langland was certainly revising the A-text of his *Visio* in 1376-7,<sup>1</sup> and it is possible that he inserted this passage, with its attack on the *possessionati*, some years after the date at which he had composed the rest of this Passus. But Langland was always liable to digress from his theme under the stress of his emotions; and this passage need not be referred to the later date. Popular feeling against the clerical magnates and the *possessionati* was acute in the winter of 1370-71, and led to the fall of Wykeham and Brantingham from office in the parliamentary crisis of February 1371.<sup>2</sup> These verses may be taken as reflecting London opinion during that preliminary storm.

I have found no political allusions at all in the long abstract discussions of Passus XVI, XVII and XVIII. But Passus XIX is very much more controversial in tone. One definite allusion to contemporary politics seems to have escaped previous commentators. It occurs at XIX. 411-21, in the speech of the 'lewd vicar':

I knewe neure cardynal pat he ne cam fro þe pope,  
 And we clerkes, whan þey come, for her comunes payeth,  
 For her pelure and her palfreyes mete & piloures pat hem folweth.  
 Þe comune *clamat cotidie*, eche a man to other,  
 Þe contre is þe curseder pat cardynales come inne:  
 And þere they ligge and lenge moste, lecherye þere regneth.  
 For-þi', quod þis vicori, 'be verrey god I wolde  
 That no cardynal come amonge þe comune peple,  
 But in her holynesse holden hem stille  
 At Auynoun amonge þe iuwes, *cum sancto sanctus eris*, &c.,  
 Or in Rome, as here rule wole, þe reliques to kepe.

There is a note of bitterness here which again suggests that Langland is uttering a complaint that his hearers would be quick to understand and appreciate. Cardinals were infrequent visitors in the England of Edward III, so far as I have been able to discover. In 1368 Urban V made Simon Langham, then archbishop of Canterbury, a cardinal; and Langham incurred Edward's displeasure by accepting the elevation without having first obtained the King's consent. Edward adjudged the see of Canterbury to be vacated by the appointment, and Langham thought it more prudent to obey and resign. He left England for France, but was soon reconciled

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 15 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Anthony Steel has given the most recent commentary on this crisis: *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1941), 12-18.

with the King who used him as his personal agent at the papal court of Urban V and Gregory XI. Soon after his elevation to the papacy (30 December 1370) Gregory XI began to negotiate peace between the Kings of France and England. He had appointed two cardinals as his representatives in these negotiations by the autumn of 1371.<sup>1</sup>

The two chosen ambassadors were Simon Langham, commonly known as 'the Cardinal of Canterbury', and the French Cardinal of Beauvais. They are named in a papal document of 13 November 1371; but they do not seem to have reached England before January 1372. They had left the country again within a few weeks, and must have spent most of that time in the neighbourhood of London. Their mission ended in failure and Langham finally crossed over to Ghent. Here he was at least able to negotiate a peace between the King of England and the Count of Flanders.

It is surely natural to connect Langland's verses with this brief visit. The concluding lines, with their suggestion that these Roman cardinals would be better placed among the Jews of Avignon, if they are not prepared to do their duty and keep watch over the holy relics of Rome, fits the occasion well. Urban V had failed to maintain himself in Rome and had returned to Avignon in 1370. It was no secret that the French cardinals were overjoyed at his failure.

In XIX. 426-7 there is another allusion to contemporary history:

Inparfyt is that pope þat al peple shulde helpe,  
And sendeth hem þat sleeth suche as he shulde saue.

And again in XIX. 439-42:

And god amende þe pope þat pileth holykirke,  
And cleymeth bifor þe kynge to be keper ouer crystene,  
And counteth nouȝt þough crystene ben culled & robbed,  
And fynt folke to fyȝte and cristene blode to spille.

It is very tempting to associate these verses with the sack of Cesena in February 1377. Gregory XI had returned to Rome in the winter of 1376-7, and had appointed the French Cardinal Robert of Geneva (later Pope Clement VII) as his legate in Italy. Robert was commissioned to organize the Pope's forces against Florence and her allies, and he did his work with ruthless cruelty. His worst excess was the sack of Cesena—a massacre which was long remembered against him in the early years of the schism. If Langland is here alluding to Gregory XI and Cardinal Robert, the passage must be one of the latest—probably the latest—political allusion in

<sup>1</sup> For the dates see Rymer's *Foedera*, III (13 Nov. 1371; 22 Jan. 1371/2; 5 April 1372). Walsingham mentions this embassy in *Hist. Angl.* I. 313, but does not name the ambassadors. The anonymous continuator of *Eulogium Historiarum* (III. 336-7) dates this embassy wrongly to 1374; it is not his only mistake. Skeat, in his commentary in *Passus XIII*, 175, quotes from the 'Chronicle of London': '1372. This same yere . . . too cardinals were sent fro the pope to entrete for the pees between the two reaulmes'.

the whole of the B-text, for news of the massacre at Cesena can hardly have reached England until the late spring or early summer of 1377. But the verses may apply to an earlier period. Urban V, though a gentler Pope than Gregory XI, commissioned Cardinal Albornoz to restore his temporal power in Italy during his residence at Avignon; and Albornoz fought a long series of bitter campaigns in the years 1353-67. There was more trouble when Urban had gone back to Rome, and the year 1370 was so disastrous for the Pope that he returned to Avignon. Langland may be alluding to these troubles in the verses I have quoted. The complaint that the Pope 'cleymeth bifor þe kyng to be keper ouer crystene' fits either Urban or Gregory. For both of them had renewed the papal claim to the English tribute-money, and Wyclif's first experience of public life in the embassy of 1374 was connected with this claim.<sup>1</sup>

Langland takes the King's side in another passage of his poem (XIX. 462-76):

And þanne come þere a kyng & bi his croune seyde:  
 'I am Kyng with croune þe comune to reule,  
 And holykirke & clergie fro cursed men to defende.  
 And if me lakketh to lyue by, the lawe wil I take it'.

I shall have more to say about a petition of two Austin friars to the Westminster parliament of 1371, in which this very doctrine is set forth with astonishing boldness and simplicity of language.<sup>2</sup> Langland's views are here Wyclif's views, and they might have been propounded at any time in the years 1371-8.

It is time to sum up this portion of my argument. In his masterly paper on 'Long Will, Dante and the Righteous Heathen' the late Professor R. W. Chambers, to whom we all owe so much, has pointed out the essential unity of the last eight Passus of the B-text.<sup>3</sup> This poem begins with the scene of a friar who dines gluttonously with Conscience, and ends with the friars leading the vanguard of Hell in Passus XX. If the unnamed friar of Passus XIII is identified as William Jordan, we have reason to suspect an early date for the composition of this long poem within a poem. Almost all the allusions to contemporary events that can be detected within these eight Passus fit most easily into the years 1370-72, and one allusion (to the London drought of April 1370) is beyond dispute. One passage (the criticism of the Pope in XIX. 438-42) may perhaps refer to the sack of Cesena in February 1377; but this interpretation is doubtful, and the verses can fairly be explained as referring to papal policy some years earlier.

<sup>1</sup> H. B. Workman: *John Wyclif* (Oxford, 1926) I, 209-56.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> R. W. Chambers, in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association IX* (1924), 50-69.

On the whole there seems to be no reason for assigning these Passus to a date later than 1370-72, and there are sound reasons for believing that Langland had begun work on this new poem some years earlier. If the opening scene in Passus XIII is accepted as a satire on Friar William Jordan, the direct allusion to his controversy with Uhtred of Boldon in XIII. 70 (*Periculum est in falsis fratribus*) suggests a date not much later than 1366-7, the most probable date of that controversy. The allusion to a 'vagabond' bishop of Nazareth in XV. 486 is again most easily explained if Langland was composing these verses soon after the death of Richard, archbishop of Nazareth, who died in 1365. Langland's own personal confessions in XI. 45-8 suggest an interval of some wasted years between the composition of the A-text and the new poem of the B-text. But Langland's mind can never have been wholly idle, and I think it is reasonable to assume that he was meditating his new 'meteles'—with its sharp criticism of the friars and its preoccupation with the salvation of the heathen—soon after those first productive years in London to which we owe the *Visio* and the *Vita* of the A-text.

## V

THE REVISION OF THE *VITA* AND THE *VISIO*

Professor Chambers has pointed out the significance of the two Passus XI and XII of the B-text, which Langland has substituted for the inconclusive ending of the *Vita* in Passus XII of the original A-text.<sup>1</sup> The poet tells us himself that there had been an interval of some wasted years between the composition of the first and second drafts of his poem; and he reminds himself twice in this section (XI. 46; XII. 3) that he is now an old man of five and forty years. After these wasted years he returns to the quest of Do-wel and Do-bet. These two Passus are thus most closely connected in thought with the eight concluding Passus of the poem; and internal evidence confirms this judgment. There are the same general preoccupations with the position of the friars in Holy Church, the salvation of the good heathen and the problem of predestination. Indeed the poet has taken us into his confidence at the beginning of Passus XI, and reveals to us his doubts as to whether his new criticisms of the friars as mischief-makers in Holy Church may not be judged a dangerous novelty. That is the meaning of his short dialogue with Loyalty in XI. 84-7:

And lewte loked on me, and I loured after.

'Wherfore lourestow?' quod lewte, and loked on me harde.

'3if I durste', quod I, 'amonges men þis meteles auowe:'

'3e, bi peter and bi poule', quod he, 'and take hem bothe to witnesse:

*Non oderis fratres secrete in corde tuo, set publice argue illos'.*

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Chambers, loc. cit. 56-7.

It seems clear that this piece of self-justification fixes the date of these two Passus as an apology for the daring assault upon the friars which is the theme of Passus XIII-XX.

The same general anti-mendicant bias can be detected in Langland's additions to the primitive A-text. But here a distinction must be made between the additions to the *Vita* (Passus VIII-X of the B-text), and the additions to the *Visio* (Passus I-VII). Whilst there is nothing in the additions to the *Vita* that suggests a date later than 1371-4, there is clear proof that the additions to the *Visio* cannot be earlier than 1376-7. If my interpretation of the evidence is correct, these additions to the text of Passus I-VII are the latest passages in the whole complicated poem.

In the A-text of the *Vita* the poet 'yrobbed in russet' wanders in search of Do-wel (Passus VIII. 1-6):

Tyl it befel on a fryday two freres I mette:  
Maistres of þe Menours, men of grette witte.

The poet greets them and asks them of their charity to let him know where Do-wel dwells. The scene plainly suggests that the Friars Minor are as likely as any other masters to know the way to Do-wel's home. In spite of the general anti-mendicant bias of the B-text this scene has been allowed to remain unchanged, but Langland adds four verses to explain his thought:

For þei men on þis molde þat moste wyde walken,  
And knowen contrees and courtes and many kynnes places,  
Bothe prynces paleyses and pore mennes cotes,  
And do-wel and do-yuel, where þei dwelle bothe.

Passus X, as revised in the B-text, has many allusions to the controversy between the mendicant friars and the secular clergy. A long insertion in X. 71-100, for example, begins with these significant lines:

Freres and faitoures han founde suche questiuons  
To plesse with proude men sithen þe pestilence tyme,  
And prechen at seint poules for pure enuye of clerkis . . .

Again in X. 230-90 there is a long insertion into the A-text, including an exhortation (267-8) which implies that 'alle manere prelates as parsones and parisshe prestes' have the duty of preaching and teaching amendment to the people.

But the most significant passage in the B-text of the *Vita* occurs in X. 314-31. These verses are a well-known crux for the commentators, but I think that a simple explanation is to be found in the contemporary politics of 1371. Langland has here retained his famous satire on the vagrant monks of his day (306-9). But he now adds a passage in which these monks are denounced for their failure to give alms to the poor:

In many places þer hij persones ben be hem-self at ese,  
Of þe pore haue þei no pite, and þat in her charite.  
Ac þei leten hem as lordes, her londe lith so brode.



There follows the famous prophecy (317-20) of the King who shall come and confess these religious, beating them as the Bible telleth and putting them to penance. The poet here turns suddenly on the friars, and his language is more obscure (323-5):

And þanne Freres in here freitoure shal fynden a keye  
Of costantynes coffres, in which is þe catel  
Þat Gregories god-children han yuel dispended.

This is followed by the still more famous prophecy of the abbot of Abingdon, who shall 'haue a knokke of a kynge, and incurable þe wounde'.

I have nothing to add to the familiar commentaries on the abbot of Abingdon and his fellow-prelates. But the friars, who have found in their 'freitoures' a key to open Constantine's coffers, have long puzzled the commentators. More than twenty years ago Professor Galbraith printed an interesting set of Norman-French articles from Harleian MS. 638.<sup>1</sup> This text is a copy of a petition which two English Austin friars brought before the parliament of 1371. It is significant that our sole surviving copy should come from the archives of the great Benedictine abbey of Bury St. Edmund's, whither it must have been brought from Westminster by the abbot, John de Brinkley. The abbot would have attended parliament as one of the spiritual peers of the realm, and he was liable to be questioned on these articles by his fellow-monks in his capacity as president of the English Black Monks. Professor Galbraith has explained the circumstances of the petition. Parliament had been asked to vote a subsidy of £50,000 for the King's use in the French war, and the lay-lords demanded that the burden should be divided between the clergy and the people. The spokesmen of the great Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries resisted this claim, and Wyclif has reported the substance of a speech which an unnamed lay-lord delivered on this occasion.<sup>2</sup> The petition of the two Austin friars shows that they were working openly on the side of the laity against the *possessionati*. They argue from Saint Ambrose and Saint Bernard that, when need arises, the Church must be ready to sacrifice her wealth for the common good; and they cite the Decretals in proof of their contention that the Donation of Constantine was a free gift from the Emperor, and could therefore be justly demanded back in time of crisis.

It seems plain that we have here an exact parallel to the doctrine which Langland propounds in Passus X. 314-31. The wealth which the parliament wishes to seize is 'the catel that Gregories god-children han yuel dispended'; and the allusion to Constantine's coffers could not be more apt. But Langland differs from the friars on one important point. It is clear that he suspects their intrigues. This new zeal of the friars for the spolia-

<sup>1</sup> H. V. Galbraith, in *E. H. R.* XXXIV (1919), 579-82.

<sup>2</sup> Wyclif: *De Civili Dominio*, ed. Loserth (Wyclif Soc.) II, 7.

tion of the wealthy monasteries may be inspired by envy and greed. The friars who are preaching such doctrine from the pulpits of London, or who are preparing these articles for submission to parliament, think that they have found a key that shall open Constantine's coffers for their own use. But Langland is determined that no friar shall inherit the wealth that the monasteries may lose. He looks to the laity as the rightful owners of the Church's superfluous wealth, and I have already quoted the verses in which he makes this plain (XV. 526-8):

Take her landes, 3e lordes, and let her lyue by dymes.  
If possessioun be poysoun & inparfit hem make,  
Good were to dischargen hem for holicherche sake.

The parallel is here so close between Langland's doctrine and the doctrine set forth by the two Austin friars in 1371 that it seems safe to conclude the poet was writing soon after the parliament of that year. However, the argument cannot be pressed too far, for Langland may have known of these doctrines, not (as we know them) from the text of the articles themselves, but from the contemporary sermon of some mendicant friar in London. And we know that the friars were still playing at this dangerous game of politics in 1374, three years after the parliament of 1371.<sup>1</sup>

One last coincidence may be noted here. In Passus XII. 128-9 there is a clear statement of that Augustinian theory of lordship which Wyclif, supported by a powerful group of Oxford politicians, was to use so effectively against the *possessionati* of his day:

For clergie is kepere vnder cryst of heuene:  
Was pere neuere no knyghte but clergie hym made.

At first sight it is surprising to find this doctrine expressed by Langland, who insists so sharply on the King's claims as against the Pope in the government of the realm. But I have argued elsewhere that some of the Austin friars at Oxford, and probably also in London, were using this same doctrine in their campaign against the *possessionati* at this very time.<sup>2</sup>

These few indications suggest a date c. 1371-4 for the revised B-text of the *Vita*, including Passus XI and XII. There is no apparent reason for suggesting a later date, and the true date may be 1371-2.

We turn now to the revision of the A-text of the *Visio* (Passus I-VII). Here the evidence is so well known that there is no need to delay over it. There can be no doubt at all that Langland revised this portion of his poem in 1376-7. The parable of the cat and the rats in the revised Prologue (112-207) cannot be earlier than 1376, and I agree with Dr. Owst in his view that the Angel in this passage is most probably Bishop Brunton,

<sup>1</sup> A. Gwynn: *English Austin Friars*, 212-6.

<sup>2</sup> I have discussed the history of this doctrine: *ibid.*, 59-73; 230-6.

while the 'Goliardys' is Sir Peter de la Mare.<sup>1</sup> Another familiar allusion is in Passus III. 299-349. Here I can see no difficulty in accepting Skeat's suggestion that these verses refer to the jubilee of Edward III's fiftieth anniversary as King of England (February 1377). Setting aside a doubtful allusion to the massacre of Cesena in XIX. 426-7, this long insertion seems to contain an allusion to the latest fixed date in the whole B-text.

There are a few other passages in this revision of the *Visio* which fit a date c. 1376-7, though their interpretation is not sufficiently clear to be used as a conclusive argument. Prologue 100-111, for example, with its complaint about the power of the cardinals at the papal court, gains added point if it was written on the eve of the schism. In V. 49-57 the King is admonished to love his people and the Pope is prayed to have pity on Holy Church: again the allusion is vague, but the sense fits well with the general history of these years. Finally, in V. 141-7 there is another allusion to the strife between the friars and the *possessionati*; but it is so vague that the verses cannot be used as an argument for any fixed date within a wide limit of several years.

On the whole, it seems to me probable that Langland revised the A-text of the *Visio* in 1376-7, when the rest of the B-text was already more or less in its present shape. Here and there he may have inserted some verses in other sections of his great poem during this final revision, and our B-text, as it is now extant in the manuscript tradition, may thus be a doubly revised text. But there is little hope of detecting every trace of such insertions.

An examination of the historical background of the C-text lies outside my competence, and could only be attempted when the textual critics have given us a more authoritative text. Meanwhile it seems reasonable to assume that the C-text is what it is commonly held to be: an old man's last revision of a poem that had now become, in the most literal sense, the work of a lifetime.

## VI

### THE CONTROVERSIES OF FRIAR WILLIAM JORDAN

In 1368 a Cistercian monk named Adam, who was abbot of Rewley near Oxford, wrote a dedicatory letter to Simon Langham, archbishop of Canterbury, part of which Bale has copied into his notebooks.<sup>2</sup> Adam mentions Uhtred of Boldon as having disputed with success in the Oxford schools: 'Oxonii multas opiniones nouas et subtiles inuenit per studii laborem scolastici exercitii gratia'. But Uhtred had been troubled by an unscrupulous adversary: '. . . et aduersarium molestissimum habebat

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Owst: *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1933), 578-88; and also A. Steel: *Richard II*, 29-31.

<sup>2</sup> Bale's *Index Scriptorum*, ed. R. L. Poole and M. Bateson (Oxford, 1902), 7; 463.

Guilhelmum Iordan Dominicanum calumniatorem, qui eum ab ecclesie unitate proscindere nitebatur'. Jordan had plainly accused Uhtred of heresy, and the dispute was a recent memory in 1368. The Durham monk came well out of the tussle, according to Adam's friendly account: 'sed minime claudicabat Uhtredus quem sciencie claritas illustrabat, morum exornabat probitas atque ab annis iuuenilibus venustabat conuersationis honestas'.

Adam, as a Cistercian monk, was naturally inclined to take the side of a monk against a friar. But his evidence throws light on the tactics used by William Jordan in 1366. The date is confirmed by a letter which Mr. Pantin has recently published from a hitherto unnoticed and uncatalogued Durham document.<sup>1</sup> This document contains some records of a special visitation of Whitby Abbey in the summer and autumn of 1366. The visitation had been entrusted to two special visitors: the abbot of St. Mary's, York, and Uhtred of Boldon who represented the two senior abbots of St. Albans and Bury St. Edmunds. Among these records is the text of a letter written by a monk of St. Mary's, York, to some unnamed master of theology at Oxford. Uhtred of Boldon returned to Oxford soon after the visitation, which was concluded on 12 October, 1366; and Mr. Pantin conjectures that the letter, which reports on events at Whitby since the visitation, was written to Uhtred at Oxford. There is an allusion to William Jordan in the last sentence of this letter, which is unfortunately partly illegible. Mr. Pantin prints the text as follows: '... De modo accessus et recessus fratris Willelmi Iordani de Oxonia . . . aliis (incidendus? oportunis) libenter audirem'. It is no more than a glimpse, but it shows us William Jordan at Oxford in the autumn of 1366, already a person in whom the monks of York and Durham are much interested. Very probably his controversy with Uhtred had begun; it may even have been concluded at this date.

William Jordan was not a prolific writer, to judge by Bale's list of his works: *Contra positiones Vuicleui*; *Pro mendicitate contra Utredum*; *Questiones de conceptione*.<sup>2</sup> Later scholars have added to this list by the simple process of combining Bale's titles with the works of at least one other Friar Jordan.<sup>3</sup> None of Jordan's tracts survives to-day, or at least none has so far been identified. Since Bale does not give the *incipit* of any

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Pantin: *Documents illustrating the Chapters of the English Black Monks* (Camden Soc., 1937) III, 308-9.

<sup>2</sup> Bale's *Catalogus* (Basle, 1559), 483.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Marrett (op. cit. 50) has noted the growth of these lists of Friar Jordan's works. Antonius Senensis, in his *Bibliotheca ordinis fratrum predicatorum* (Paris, 1585), 99, gives a list that is entirely different from the list given in Bale's *Catalogus*. Possevinus, Pits, Dempster, Tanner and even Echard combine these two lists under the name of our William Jordan, with some minor corrections. Antonius Senensis seems to have been describing the works of a William Jordan, whose *floruit* he gives as c. 1262.

of the works he names, it is not certain that he had seen or read these texts —though he adds the comment: 'Caeterorum eius opusculorum nihil vidi'. The first of his three titles is suspect, since it may easily be due to a misunderstanding of the tract against Uhtred. Such errors are only too common in Bale's lists.

We can form some impression of Jordan's tract against Uhtred from Uhtred's rejoinder, which is extant under the title *Contra querelas fratrum* in Royal MS. 6.D.x.<sup>1</sup> This is the tract which begins with the Pauline text: *Periculum in falsis fratribus*. Uhtred does not name his adversary, but Adam's letter to Langham makes it almost certain that Uhtred is here replying to Jordan's charges. In his rejoinder Uhtred summarises his opponent's charges under 28 separate headings, many of which imply a charge of heresy. The Durham monk defends his orthodoxy with great vigour: 'Ut autem expressius eorum latens falsitas convincatur . . . ipsorum scripturam tam detestabilem quoad puncta singula recitabo et ubi mentiti fuerint ac ubi vera immiscuerint declarabo. Incipiunt quidem isti falsi fratres suam mendacem cedula ista modo. . . .' Uhtred's defence has throughout a ring of genuine and indignant sincerity.

More than ten years before the date of his dispute with Uhtred at Oxford, William Jordan was involved in another controversy with a well known Franciscan preacher, John Mardisley or Marchiley; and his tactics seem to have been the same on each occasion. Bale tells us that Jordan and Mardisley disputed in public on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception—a doctrine which could easily, at this date, involve a charge of heresy.<sup>2</sup> Neither Jordan's *Questiones de conceptione* nor Mardisley's *De Mariae conceptione*, both of which are named by Bale, survives to-day; what we know of the controversy is derived from an entry in the register of the dean and chapter at York.<sup>3</sup> Jordan was certainly prior of the Dominican convent at York in 1358.<sup>4</sup> His presence at York in 1355 is thus probable, though it cannot be proved. On 10 April 1355, the chapter issued letters testimonial in favour of John Mardisley, who had been 'determining' as master of theology in the chapter-house and in the cathedral school at York: 'in domo nostra et in scolis cancellarii dicte ecclesie'. The Franciscan doctor had been abused by some unnamed adversary, and the chapter were asked to certify that he had shown Christian meekness and humility in his hour of trial: ' . . . absque illatione probrorum et impropriorum quorumcunque benigne modeste et curialiter se gerebat, et si que probrosa ei fuerant imposita ea sustulit patienter prout decuit sapientem'.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Marcett has printed a lamentably inaccurate edition of this tract from Royal MS. 6.D.x. Mr. J. A. W. Bennett has noted a few specimen corrections from the text of this MS. in *Medium Aevum* VIII. 2 (June 1939), 170.

<sup>2</sup> Bale's *Catalogus*, 483, 486.

<sup>3</sup> Tanner; *Bibliotheca*, 509.

<sup>4</sup> *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (1358-60), 27.



William Jordan is not named in this extract; but Miss Marcett has brought forward sound reasons for identifying him as Mardisley's opponent in this public debate. We have Bale's statement that the two men disputed in public, and we know that Jordan was prior of the York convent in 1358. Moreover Jordan's name appears on the Patent Rolls some months after this episode under curious circumstances.<sup>1</sup> On 10 August 1355 a writ was issued ordering Walter de Columpton to arrest a Dominican friar named Thomas Hopman, who had crossed to foreign parts without the King's license in spite of repeated proclamations to the contrary. On 12 October of the same year a similar writ was issued for the arrest of Friar William Jordan. The two friars seem to have succeeded in leaving the kingdom, and their arrest was ordered on news of their return. So at least it would appear from the further order that Thomas Hopman is to be brought to the prior of the Dominican convent of Dunwich in Suffolk, whilst William Jordan is to be brought to the prior of the convent in Chelmsford. It seems a fair conclusion that the two friars had left England some weeks or months before the dates of their arrest; and we are thus brought back to a date very close to April 1355. They may have crossed the sea in their eagerness to denounce their Franciscan opponent at Avignon. Thoresby, who was chancellor from 1349-56, would have seen to their punishment.

In the winter of 1356-7 the four medicant orders were united for a time in a common resistance to the onslaught of Archbishop FitzRalph, whose sermons against the friars from the pulpit of St. Paul's had stirred all London.<sup>2</sup> FitzRalph crossed the sea to Avignon in the autumn of 1357, and delivered his famous *Propositio* against the privileges of the friars, commonly known as his *Defensorium Curatorum*, before the papal consistory on 8 November 1357. On 26 March 1358 the King granted letters of protection for Friar William Jordan, O.P., who was going across the sea 'on the King's service'; these letters, which were originally granted until Michaelmas of that year, were extended on 3 October until the following mid-summer.<sup>3</sup> The dates are confirmed by two entries in the *Calendar of Papal Petitions*.<sup>4</sup> Jordan was granted an indulgence for six persons at Avignon on 25 June 1358, soon after his arrival at the papal court; and he was granted a further privilege for use in the realm of England on 4 April 1359, some weeks before the expiration of his extended letters of protection. We may conclude that he returned to England in the summer of 1359. There is no further indication as to the nature of the King's business which was the excuse for his journey to Avignon, but we know on good contemporary authority that Jordan was active in the defence of the friars against FitzRalph in 1358.

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (1354-8), 298.

<sup>2</sup> A. Gwynn: *English Austin Friars*, 80-89.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1358-60), 27; 101.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Papal Petitions* I. 330, 338.



In his *Annales Ecclesiastici* Rainaldi states, on the authority of 'Henry Bitwel', that Jordan disputed against FitzRalph at Avignon in 1358.<sup>1</sup> Rainaldi's authority has recently been identified as an unpublished *questio* of Henry Bitterfeld, O.P., which is extant in Vat. MS. Lat. 4109, ff. 261-5, and in Basle Univ. MS. A.x.130.<sup>2</sup> Bitterfeld cites Jordan against FitzRalph as follows: 'Alius error fuit Armacani qui dictus est Ricardus primas Hibernie a. 1317 (*sic!*) contra quem fecit et conclusit magister Guilielmus Iordani de Anglia coram papa'. There is a collection of unpublished documents concerning these Avignon disputes in Cambridge, Sidney Sussex MS. 64△.4.2.<sup>3</sup> Jordan is nowhere named in this collection as among FitzRalph's adversaries, but it is at least a very odd coincidence that this Sidney Sussex MS. should contain a list of erroneous and heretical doctrines (none of them connected with FitzRalph's characteristic theories) which were imputed to the archbishop and his supporters at Avignon, and against which FitzRalph had to protest. Jordan was not the only friar capable of imputing heresy to his opponent, but his known presence at Avignon in 1358 makes him at least suspect of complicity.

Here then we have a highly contentious friar, whose comings and goings can be traced with fair accuracy from 1355-59, and who appears again as Uhtred's opponent at Oxford in 1366-7. After that we hear no more of him, so far as the official records tell their tale. If Langland is indeed alluding to William Jordan in Passus XIII, we may assume that Jordan had been preaching at St. Paul's before 1370. The text on which he is said to have preached (*Ter virgis cesus sum*, etc.) occurs in the Epistle for Sexagesima Sunday, and Jordan may have been invited to preach at St. Paul's on that day.

Miss Marcett believes that Jordan left England for France at some date before 1378, and that he was still active in France during the first ten years of the schism. But she has here been led astray by a great Dominican scholar, Jacques Echard, whose *Scriptores Ordinis Predicatorum* appeared in 1719.<sup>4</sup> Echard found a record of Jordan's dispute with Mardisley on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception—most probably in Bale's *Scriptores*. Not knowing the date of this dispute, he assumed that it was part of a more general controversy which disturbed the whole French province of the order in 1389. Having thus convinced himself that Jordan was active in France in 1389, he has added to the confusion by identifying Jordan (without any further reason) as an unnamed English friar who attended a

<sup>1</sup> Rainaldus, *Annales Eccles.* a. 1358, note 6.

<sup>2</sup> G. Meerseemann, O.P., in *Archivum Fratrum Predicatorum* (Rome, 1935) V, 131, note 1. Bitterfeld's *questio* was disputed at Prague in 1396. He would have known the history of the controversy with FitzRalph from Dominican sources.

<sup>3</sup> I have noted the chief documents from this MS., but they have not yet been printed.

<sup>4</sup> Echard: *Scriptores Ord. Predicatorum* (Paris, 1719) I, 695-6.

chapter general of the French obedience of the order in 1388. Once the dispute with Mardisley is dated to 1355, as is in every way most probable, the basis of Echard's argument is destroyed. There is nothing to connect William Jordan with the French chapter general of 1388 or the French controversies of 1389.

Had Jordan been alive in 1388-9, he would almost certainly have plunged headlong into the controversy with Wyclif; but his name does not occur in any of the numerous texts and documents that have survived from those stormy years. Indeed it is probable that he had died before 1374, for he is not mentioned as one of the spokesmen in the fictitious Westminster Council of that year. I have argued elsewhere that this curious narrative, which has been incorporated as sober history in an anonymous continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, must be interpreted as a pamphlet issued by some supporter of the Black Prince's party in the controversies of the day.<sup>1</sup> Uhtred of Boldon is named as the chief spokesman of the clerical party against whom the pamphlet is directed. John Mardisley appears as the Franciscan spokesman, and Thomas Asshebourne, another well-known preacher, represents the Austin Friars. The Dominicans are represented by their provincial, Thomas Rushook, a court politician whose excessive caution is satirised in an amusing scene. There is, of course, no conclusive proof to be found in this argument *ex silentio*. But all that we know of the character of Friar William Jordan suggests that he could hardly have remained silent in a controversy which had drawn his two former antagonists, John Mardisley and Uhtred of Boldon, into opposing camps. It seems to me probable that the Dominican champion was either dead or disabled by illness before this date.

These details may seem tedious, but they confirm with remarkable precision the date (c. 1370-72) which I have suggested for the composition of Passus XIII-XX of the B-text.

<sup>1</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum* (Rolls Series) III, 337-9; A. Gwynn, op. cit., 218-21.

## SOURCE AND MOTIVE IN *MACBETH* AND *OTHELLO*

BY ELMER EDGAR STOLL

Shakespeare, of course, has, like the Greeks, unlike the Bourbon French, no *règles*, no rule or formula. But for all that, why, in *Othello* and *Macbeth*, two of the great tragedies which are not histories and which apparently are not in any measure *rifacimenti* of previous plays, does he, in the matter of motivation, deviate so widely and so similarly from his sources?

### I

What in *Macbeth* he has omitted and what substituted Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has made admirably clear, but not also the reasons for this or the similarity of procedure in *Othello*:

The *Chronicle* does, indeed, allow just one loophole for pardon. It hints that Duncan, nominating his boy to succeed him, thereby cut off Macbeth from a reasonable hope of the crown, which he thereupon (and not until then) by process of murder usurped, 'having', says Holinshed, 'a juste quarell so to doo (as he tooke the matter)'. [For the crown was then not strictly hereditary, and 'by the old lawes of the realme, if he that should succeed were not of able age to take the charge upon himselfe, he that was next of blood unto him should be admitted'.<sup>1</sup>] Did Shakespeare use that one hint, enlarge that loophole? [asks Sir Arthur]. He did not.

Instead of using a paltry chance to condone Macbeth's guilt, he seized on it and plunged it threefold deeper . . .

He made this man, a sworn soldier, murder Duncan, his liege-lord.

He made this man, a host, murder Duncan, a guest within his gates.

He made this man, strong and hale, murder Duncan, old, weak, asleep and defenceless.

He made this man commit murder for nothing but his own advancement.

He made this man murder Duncan, who had steadily advanced him hitherto, who had never been aught but trustful, and who (that no detail of reproach might be wanting) had that very night, as he retired, sent, in most kindly thought, the gift of a diamond to his hostess.

To sum up: instead of extenuating Macbeth's criminality, Shakespeare doubles and redoubles it. (*Shakespeare's Workmanship* (1930), pp. 34-5.)

And yet Macbeth is the protagonist, the hero, with whom as such, for the right tragic effect, there must, naturally, be some large measure of sympathy. So, having thus put him much farther beyond the reach of our sympathy than in the original, what does the dramatist then do but (indirectly) bring him back within it—by the power of poetry, by the exhibition of the hero's

<sup>1</sup> *Boswell-Stone's Holinshed* (1896), p. 25. Sir Arthur's quotation preceding is curtailed; 'for that Duncane did what in him lay to defraud him of all maner of title and claime, which he might, in time to come, pretend unto the crowne'.

bravery and virtue at the beginning, by emphasizing the influence of the supernatural presented, and of his wife's inordinate, distinctly, ambition mentioned in the source?

There are additional devices which Sir Arthur dwells upon: such as the flattening of the other characters—that the hero and heroine may stand out in high relief—to absorb our interest and (presumably on Watts-Dunton's principle<sup>1</sup>) our sympathy also; and such as the keeping of the murders in the background, off the stage. 'There is some deep law in imaginative illusion,' says the novelist and critic, 'whereby the identification of the spectator's personality is with the active character in most dramatic actions rather than the passive.' We share the emotions, the perturbations of Macbeth and his Lady, as even of Clytaemnestra and Phaedra, because they are the impassioned doers and speakers, constantly in the foreground; and it is with their ears that we hear the owl and the cricket, the voices in the castle and the knocking at the gate. And still more clearly the method is that of the ancients. The central complication—the contrast—is that recommended by Aristotle,<sup>2</sup> the *good* man doing the deed of horror, though not unwittingly, nor quite unwillingly, either. As with the ancients, again, he is under the sway of fate; for the Weird Sisters and his Lady—'burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene'<sup>3</sup>—together amount to that.

This, of course, is not what we call motivation, not psychology. For both—the narrative of external motivation and the internal—there was, positively and negatively, better provision in Holinshed—not only the 'juste quarell (as he took the matter)' but also 'the feeble and slouthfull administration of Duncane',<sup>4</sup> the slaying of him without treachery or violating the laws of hospitality, and the just and efficient rule (for ten years) which followed.<sup>5</sup> La carrière ouverte aux talents, and Macbeth had the justification of Napoleon, of Cromwell. But not the Macbeth of Shakespeare.

Nor is this what we call drama, either, as it is ordinarily practised to-day. It is as in Aristotle—situation first and motivation or psychology afterwards, if at all. It is emotional effect, with which psychology or even simple narrative coherence often considerably interferes. To Schiller's neglect of careful motivation, and in a day of psychology and philosophy both, Goethe even attributes his superiority on the stage.<sup>6</sup> Shakespeare sometimes neglects it through inadvertence, as, in *King John*, with the Bastard's

<sup>1</sup> *Harper's Mag.* (Nov. 1906), p. 818.

<sup>2</sup> *Poetics*, cap. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Boswell-Stone's Holinshed* (1896), p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32. Cf. p. 20; 'At length, Macbeth speaking much against the kings softnes and overmuch slacknesse in punishing offenders . . .'

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32: 'he set his whole intention to maintaine justice and to punish all enormities and abuses which had chanced', etc.; 'made manie holesome laws and statutes for the publike weale'.

<sup>6</sup> Eckermann (Castle) I, p. 400.

grudge against the Duke of Austria; sometimes, as with Hamlet's feigning of lunacy and Lear's dividing of the kingdom, because, the motive in the old play not being a good one, it is better that there should be none at all: but in Macbeth the omission is deliberate and intentional, and the contravention of psychological probability is so as well. Here, as generally in Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* being only a partial exception, character is not its own destiny, the action is not exclusively derived from it. In Shakespeare 'a human being' is *not*, as in Galsworthy's words or as in his own and his fellows' practice, 'the best plot there is'. To Shakespeare's minor characters the words better apply. The hero's conduct, at the heart of the action, is often not in keeping with his essential nature but in contrast with it.

Manifestly—and, if not forthwith, certainly upon a moment's consideration—by all the motives prompting or circumstances attending the murder of Duncan that have been omitted, the big, sharply outlined, highly emotional contrast in the situation of a good man doing the deed of horror would be broken or obscured. If Macbeth had been thwarted or (to use Holinshed's word) 'defrauded', as having, at this juncture, a better title to the throne than Malcolm, or had thought himself better fitted to rule; or, again, if Duncan had not borne his faculties so meek and been so clear in his great office, as in the tragedy but not the chronicle he is; why, then, Macbeth's conduct in killing him would have been more reasonable and more psychologically in keeping, to be sure, but less terrible, less truly tragic. Even if Duncan had been less affectionate and generous, less admiring and confiding, still the hero's conduct would have been less truly tragic. There is positive need of 'the deep damnation of his taking off'. For the tragedy is of the brave and honourable man suddenly and squarely—and fatally—turned against the moral order. Sir Arthur compares him to Satan about to engage in the temptation: 'Evil, be thou my good'. Or 'Fair is foul and foul is fair', as the Weird Sisters have it, which Macbeth on his first appearance echoes—'So foul and fair a day I have not seen'. And that situation, no question, is a contrast big and sharp enough.

Sir Arthur does not, indeed, pause to take notice how unpsychological the change here is. Others besides fallen archangels have so turned about, but evil they do not continue to call evil. Macbeth so does. He has scarcely a word of ambition beforehand, not a word of the delight in the power when attained. As Mr. Firkins and even Mr. Bradley have observed, it is the deterrents that he dwells upon, not the incentives; it is the spectral bloody dagger that he sees, not a glittering crown; and it is 'withered murder' that he follows to the chamber, not the call to sovereign sway and masterdom. In horror he commits the crime, even as he is to remember it. There is no satisfaction but only torment in the thought of it. The conscience in him, before and after, is that of a good man, not that of the man who can do such

wickedness; first the voice of God, then either that or else—'accuser of mankind'!—the devil's. It is Macbeth himself that considers the 'deep damnation', and neither before nor after does he deceive himself, as the good, turning to wickedness, necessarily do. But the contrast is kept clear and distinct; and the emotional effect—that the whole world has acknowledged.

## II

The treatment of the material in *Othello*, probably an earlier play, is somewhat the same. In *Cinthio* there is no warrant for introducing the supernatural; but in Shakespeare's hands the villain takes the place of Fate—of the Weird Sisters and the Lady—and more completely than is usual in the tragedy of the Renaissance.

He is a devil in the flesh, as Booth played him, as Coleridge and Lamb implied, and George Woodberry, J. J. Chapman, Lytton Strachey, John Palmer, not to mention others, have explicitly put it.<sup>1</sup> Iago himself practically acknowledges it in the soliloquies—'Hell and night', 'Divinity of hell! when devils will the blackest sins put on'—and on that point apparently he and Othello at the end agree:

If that thou beest a devil, I cannot kill thee—

[wounds Iago]

I bleed, sir, but not kill'd.

Before that, to be sure, the Ancient is misapprehended by everybody; yet as Fate, as master of the show, he is holding nearly all the strings of the action in hand, and leading both heroine and hero to destruction. In the victim now, not the victimizer, is the great change; but from good to evil only under a complete delusion—'be thou my good' he neither says nor thinks, and the prince of villains himself has no need to say it. For again, as in *Macbeth*, the motives are dispensed with. The Ensign of the *novella* is deprived of the internal motives for his wickedness, and the hero relieved of the traits which might have provoked or somewhat warranted it.

As Professor Wolfgang Keller notices, the villainy is 'better motivated' in the source. That is, more plausibly, more realistically. Not a devil in the flesh, a 'black angel' as Mr. Chapman calls him, Cinthio's Ensign is still of 'the most depraved nature in the world' (*della più scelerata natura che mai fosse huomo del mondo*). And as such he has provocation enough. He is a rejected suitor, and really suspects the Captain (Shakespeare's Cassio) of being the favoured one. Against both him and the lady he has a grudge; his love for her is turned to the 'bitterest hate', whereas in the tragedy his love for Desdemona and her intrigue with Cassio are, like Cassio's and

<sup>1</sup> For their opinions see my *Shakespeare and Other Masters* (1940), pp. 233, 238, 243-4.



Othello's with Emilia, excuses and afterthoughts. There he has need of these. His genuine reason for resentment is against Othello, but only for promoting Cassio above him, and against Cassio (incidentally) for being promoted. In soliloquy, as always in drama, the truth will out. 'I hate the Moor', he mutters,

*And it is thought* abroad that 'twixt my sheets  
He has done my office.

And the next moment the pretext is made still plainer: 'I know not if't be true, but I for mere suspicion in that kind will do as if for surety'.<sup>1</sup>

So the Ensign is deprived of his motive as much as the Thane of Glamis—as much as Richard III of his, which is ambition, or as Goneril and Regan of theirs, which is envy<sup>2</sup>—but without an external Fate to relieve him of the stigma of his iniquity. He carries it indeed, like the Weird Sisters, lightly enough; and the Aristotelian contrast of the good man doing the deed of horror is presented in his victim, who, however, unlike Macbeth, is guilty only of a mistake in judgment—the *hamartia*—and is far from uttering Satan's cry. Othello never loses our sympathy, as Macbeth, despite the poignant presentation of his sufferings, cannot but do.

What is almost quite as important to the emotional effect—to the steep tragic contrast—as the apparently unmitigated wickedness of Iago, is, as in the Caledonian tragedy, the nature of the victim and the circumstances of the crime. As we have seen, Shakespeare's Moor has changed places with his wife in the villain's enmity. Love turned to hatred is too ambiguous and appealing a passion—it is that, moreover, into which the Moor himself is precipitated, and, as Strachey observes, the villain's must not be anything of a parallel. For the contrast, again, it must not be. Moreover, though Cinthio's Moor is given some noble and attractive traits, especially at the outset, Shakespeare's is both there and throughout on a far higher level of intelligence and feeling. He is not a stupid dupe or a vulgarly vindictive cuckold. He is not the man to call the informer in to do the killing, or the concealing of it afterwards. For his own safety Shakespeare's, unlike Cinthio's Moor, shows no concern. Nor is there, for that matter, the slightest evidence in his conduct or his utterance, nor in the woman's either, of the love Iago suspects between him and Emilia—no more than there is in Iago's own conduct or utterance, indeed, of his own love for Desdemona—though of late there has been a fairly prominent critic to say there is.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Shakespeare and Other Masters*, pp. 236-8 for the way that his suspicions become convictions.

<sup>2</sup> In the old *King Lear*, envy of Cordelia's beauty; cf. E. E. Kellett, *Suggestions* (1923), p. 38. For Richard cf. Brandl, *Shakespeare* (1937), p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> It is of course not enough to urge the probabilities upon us—that a healthy and vigorous soldier of the time would lead 'a man's life', and that Emilia was none too good for taking up with him. As I have repeatedly endeavoured to show, no character in fiction has a private life, beyond the reach of the writer, which a character in a biography or history,

That would be like thinking, with some Germans, that Hamlet had betrayed Ophelia, for which, to be sure, there is a little evidence, though far from enough; or with some Frenchmen, that Lady Macbeth as, re-enacting in memory the deed of blood, she whispers, 'to bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate . . . to bed, to bed, to bed', she, having enticed her husband, is now for rewarding him. On the contrary, the black man is made the grandest and noblest of Shakespeare's lovers; and it is only through Iago's overwhelming reputation for honesty and sagacity, the impenetrableness of his mask together with the potency of his seductive arts, that he is led astray and succumbs. For the highest tragic effect it is the great and good man that succumbs. Like other supreme artists, Shakespeare has here created his own world, which holds together. Like Corneille (*les grands sujets de la tragédie doivent toujours aller au delà du vraisemblable*) Goethe holds that 'in den höheren Regionen des künstlerischen Verfahrens, hat der Künstler ein freieres Spiel, und er darf sogar zu Fiktionen schreiten'.<sup>1</sup> This Shakespeare boldly does. No one else sees through Iago, including his own wife; so Othello, for not seeing, is no dupe or gull. In the matter of the Ancient's cleverness in manoeuvre and also of his success in hypocrisy the English is a little indebted to the Italian writer; but the Ensign's wife does see through him and only from fear of him holds her tongue.

In both *Macbeth* and *Othello*, then, it is the whole situation that is mainly important, not the character; it is the reciprocal matter of motivation (whether present or missing), of defects or qualities in both victim and victimizer together. Here lies the chief point of the present discussion. What if Shakespeare's Macbeth and Duncan had been like Holinshed's, or like Henry IV and Richard II, or like Cromwell and Charles I? And as I have elsewhere said, 'How the scope and stature of Iago's wickedness (and of Othello's virtue) would be limited by any adequate grudge'.<sup>2</sup> How they would be also by a credulous or suspicious nature—a predisposition or a psychology—in the hero! Against that Shakespeare has guarded not only by Iago's impregnable reputation and by his all-prevailing arts but also by Othello's own reputation for capability and for virtue. (A world of reputation and circumstance here, not of motive!) Before the temptation begins, as in *Macbeth*, but much more fully and successfully, the Moor has not only in his own right but through the admiration of everybody (and here even of the villain) been firmly established in our good opinion and our sympathies. So with Desdemona, too: the dramatic preparations are emotional, not

on the other hand, has, not being the writer's own creation. And in Shakespearean drama, as in the ancient or the classical French, none has the 'past' or the 'love-life' that is more readily expected, and so more easily suggested, to-day. Cf. my 'Shakespeare Forbears', *Mod. Lang. Notes* (May, 1939), pp. 332-39.

<sup>1</sup> Eckermann, 18 April, 1827.

<sup>2</sup> *Shakespeare and Other Masters*, p. 245.

analytical and psychological, primarily for the situation, not the character. And after the temptation has started, Desdemona, when he gives signs of jealousy, cannot believe it; 'not easily jealous' he himself says (where a Shakespearean hero, or his best friend, is expected to know) at the end. Even Iago, hearing that Othello is angry, exclaims,

and is he angry:  
Something of moment then. I will go meet him.  
There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry.

And in the fourth act, when the jealous rage is fully upon him, Lodovico, newly come from Venice, is moved to wonder and to grief:

Is this the nature  
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue  
The shot of accident nor dart of chance  
Could neither graze nor pierce?

'He is much chang'd', Iago coolly, and still not superfluously, replies. So he is, until in the last scene, by Emilia's disclosures and Iago's self-betraying resentment, he recovers something of his old stately and generous self. Macbeth too is changed, but for once and all. Othello had suffered from an overpowering delusion; and had just now, he thought, performed an act of justice. Macbeth, not deluded, had come under the domination of evil, his 'eternal jewel given to the common enemy of man'.

Neither change is probable. In neither is there much of what can be called psychology. In life neither person would really have done what he did. In both tragedy and comedy, however, that is not exactly what is to be expected: for a Henry IV, a Cromwell, we should turn to history, not the stage. What is expected is what from life we do not get—enlargement, excitement, another world, not a copy of this. And that airy edifice, an imaginative structure, is the emotionally consistent action or situation as a whole—the conduct of characters both active and passive, perhaps also a motivation both external and internal, but in any case a combination of interrelations or circumstances as important as the motives themselves; not to mention the apportionment of emphasis or relief whether in the framework or the expression, the poetry which informs both, and the individuality of the speech, which, real, though poetical, leads one to accept and delight in the improbable things said or done. 'It is when their minds [those of the audience] are preoccupied with his personality', says Dr. Bridges of Macbeth, 'that the actions follow as unquestionable realities'.<sup>1</sup> Not merely, that is, when the actions proceed from the character; and the convincing quality of the speech is only a participating element in the overpowering imaginative and emotional effect of the whole.

'In tragedy and comedy both', I have said elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> 'life must be, as it

<sup>1</sup> *The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Drama.*

<sup>2</sup> *Art and Artifice in Shakespeare* (1933), p. 163.

has ever been, piled on life, or we have visited the theatre in vain'. It is not primarily to present characters in their convincing reality that Shakespeare and the Greeks have written, nor in an action strictly and wholly of their doing, but to set them in a state of high commotion, and thus to move and elevate the audience in turn. And here I fall back upon the authority of Mr. Santayana, a philosopher who is also a poet and a critic, and who, without my knowledge until of late,<sup>1</sup> expressed similar opinions before me:

To give form to our capacities nothing is required but the appropriate occasion; this the poet, studying the world, will construct for us out of the materials of his observations. He will involve us in scenes which lie beyond the narrow lane of our daily ploddings; he will place us in the presence of important events, that we may feel our spirit rise momentarily to the height of his great argument. The possibilities of love or glory, of intrigue and perplexity, will be opened up before us; if he gives us a good plot, we can readily furnish the characters, because each of them will be the realization of some stunted potential self of our own. It is by the plot, then, that the characters will be vivified, because it is by the plot that our own character will be expanded into its latent possibilities.

The description of an alien character can serve this purpose only very imperfectly; but the presentation of the circumstances in which that character manifests itself will make description unnecessary, since our instinct will supply all that is requisite for the impersonation. Thus it seems that Aristotle was justified in making the plot the chief element in fiction: for it is by virtue of the plot that the characters live, or, rather, that we live in them, and by virtue of the plot accordingly that our soul rises to that imaginative activity by which we tend at once to escape from the personal life and to realize its ideal.

<sup>1</sup> *Poetry and Religion* (1900). Cf. my *Shakespeare and Other Masters*, p. 369. The passage here quoted is as in the *Works* (1936), ii, p. 194.

## ANOTHER ASPECT OF SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PROSE

BY HUGH MACDONALD

### I

In *The Review of English Studies* for July 1941, Mrs. Joan Bennett discussed some of the changes which took place in the character of English prose between the publication of Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) and what she calls the 'self-confident reply of the Royal Society'. She limited the title of her article to 'An Aspect of the Evolution of Seventeenth-Century Prose'; and her chief interest was in metaphor and imagery, of which she gave a subtle analysis, with examples taken largely from sermons. She quoted observations on the employment of metaphor in books as far apart in time as John Hoskins's *Directions for Speech and Style* (c. 1600) and Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690).<sup>1</sup> Critics were more concerned with the necessity of freeing language from ambiguity in the seventeenth century than they were before or have been since. In the dedication of *The Rival Ladies* (1664) Dryden says: 'I am sorry that (speaking so noble a language as we do) we have not a more certain measure of it, as they have in France, where they have an Academy erected for that purpose . . . I wish we might at length leave to borrow words from other nations, which is now a wantonness in us, not a necessity; but so long as some affect to speak them, there will not want others, who will have the boldness to write them'. Later in the same year the Royal Society appointed a committee which included Dryden, Evelyn, Godolphin, Waller, Sprat, and others for the purpose of improving the English language, but the scheme came to nothing, chiefly because of the outbreak of the Plague. Roscommon, later, also became interested in the possibility of an Academy.<sup>2</sup> John Wilkins in *An Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (1668) complains, as Hobbes had done nearly twenty years earlier, of the 'many impostures and cheats that are put upon men, under the disguise of affected insignificant phrases'. This pre-occupation was

<sup>1</sup> Hobbes, Eachard, and Sprat discuss the use of metaphor with varying degrees of disapproval. Hobbes is naturally the most downright: he says 'metaphors and senseless and ambiguous words are like *ignes fatui*'. Miss Lloyd Thomas has shewn me a passage in the preface to *The Christian Virtuoso* (1690) in which Robert Boyle defends 'similitudes or comparisons' as being helpful to the writer on science. These opinions, even at the time, had little intrinsic importance, as the question was obviously whether the 'similitudes' were good or bad, but they illustrate the difficulties that confronted or seemed to confront writers. Dryden's discussion of metaphor is, of course, free from naïvetés of this sort.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1921); *M. L. N.* Nov. 1934.

natural, for reasons which Mrs. Bennett gives; but as the evolution of English prose is historically and in other ways a more complex subject than it is sometimes made to appear, it is perhaps worth while trying to add a little, even if in rather a discursive way, to what she and Professor R. F. Jones, whose articles she mentions, have written.

Broadly speaking, much literary English prose underwent development, or at any rate changes, though slowly, between 1600 and 1660. These changes lay mostly in getting rid of excessive tropes, figures, and antitheses, and dropping part of the Elizabethan vocabulary. Writing tended, on the whole, to become more lucid. Soon after 1660 the rhetorical, and often heavily latinized, prose was discarded rather suddenly, except by an occasional writer who had survived from the past generation.

These dates are, of course, only approximate points in the stages of the evolution of prose style. In fact such general statements must, from their nature, be somewhat nebulous; and when attention is called to the change which our prose underwent after the Restoration, there is an important side to the matter which it is as well to remember. There was, I think, less a change in prose, though a change there undoubtedly was, than an almost universal disappearance of a certain kind of prose. For there had existed throughout the first half of the century, as there had existed from the days of Chaucer, or for that matter King Alfred, a straightforward prose in which it was quite easy to say plain things plainly.

A second point which I should like to emphasize is the influence which political pamphleteering and journalism had on the simplifying of prose, an influence which preceded the activities of the Royal Society and the preaching of latitudinarian divines, two of the factors which Mrs. Bennett stresses.

## II

The prose of the first fifty years of the seventeenth century was not homogeneous; for Donne, Sir Thomas Browne, and Jeremy Taylor, who are often classed together as characteristic writers of the period, had not, in fact, much in common, except that they are unlike the authors who succeeded them.

Taylor was only eighteen when Donne died in 1631. His style is easier and more harmonious than Donne's. Though they are both rhetorical they both use a good deal of simple language. Neither is like Browne, whose rhetoric is the effect of a heavier and more latinized language and of sentences written with a skill which ensures that the words shall produce an almost direct physical sensation in the reader. None of them bases the construction of his sentences on Latin as Milton often does. The prose of

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all three and of many others of their time may however be conveniently classified as rhetorical. No doubt the artificialities which were often part of this prose were to a considerable extent the result of fashion,<sup>1</sup> and had had a counterpart in *Euphuës*, which had established a mode of writing in the 1580's. Of course the rhetorical prose of the seventeenth century was, at its best, far more successful than pure euphuism had been, but both were apart from traditional English prose. Each style was used in its day by only a limited number of authors, and not always by those authors themselves. Shakespeare, after all, did not write like Lyly, nor did Sir Thomas Browne write his private letters, his recipe for roasting mutton, or even his description of a thunderstorm, in the manner of the fifth chapter of *Urn Burial*. Many intelligent men were fully aware of the different ways in which it was possible to preach or write. Abraham Wright, a Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, in 1656 published a volume called: *Five Sermons in Five Several Styles or Waies of Preaching. First in Bp. Andrew's Way, Second in Bp. Hall's Way, Third Dr. Maine's and Mr. Cartwright's Way. Fourth in the Presbyterian Way, Fifth in the Independents' Way*. The late Professor R. W. Chambers<sup>2</sup> has pointed out that in Malory's time Malory's idiom was not the normal idiom of the period. Anthologies, which tend to be made up of ornate passages, have rather distorted our view; and it is possible also that too much has been made of Sprat's famous directions on 'the proper method of discourse' in his *History of the Royal Society*, 1667.<sup>3</sup>

The use of hard words and strange metaphors had certainly been common with many writers for a long time before 1660. There were indeed books available for those who had not a ready turn for thinking of substitutes for normal English nouns and expressions. Henry Cockeram's *English Dictionarie*, 1623, for instance, suggested the use of 'concessionation' for 'loitering', 'facinorous' for 'very wicked', 'incogitancy' for 'rashness', 'fumiditie' for 'smoke', and so on. Thomas Blount in his *Glossographia* (1656) says that he has 'shun'd the old Saxon words, finding them grown more obsolete than others.' Glanvill's treatment of *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661) is an excellent illustration of the change which took place. In a revision of the book, published four years later as *Scepsis Scientifica*, he tells us that he is now 'more gratified with manly sense flowing in a

<sup>1</sup> Denham in his preface to *The Destruction of Troy*, published in 1656, but written many years before, says: 'As speech is the apparel of our thoughts so there are certain garbs or modes of speaking which vary with the times; the fashion of our clothes not being more subject to alteration than that of our speech'.

<sup>2</sup> *The Continuity of English Prose*, 1932. Chambers quotes Saintsbury: 'beautiful in itself [Malory's style] was not suited for general purposes—for historical, political, theological, philosophical, scientific and miscellaneous writing'.

<sup>3</sup> Many of the books and pamphlets by Fellows of the Royal Society were in Latin; and one of the most voluminous of the Fellows, Robert Boyle, had a prolix style.

natural and unaffected eloquence than in the musick and curiosity of fine metaphors and dancing periods'. Where he used the same material, he often made small changes. In a sentence which occurs in *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*—'the Disease of our Intellectuals is too great not to be its own Diagnostick'—the word 'Diagnostick' became 'evidence' in 1665. He wrote again 'against confidence in Philosophy' in *Essays on Several Important Subjects* (1676), and this time he used a less grandiloquent language, as the title of the book indicates. The difference between Cowley's early and late essays is, as is well known, fairly well marked. But of much greater importance than this is the fact that the splendour of the great rhetorical writers disappeared, and the more lucid but thinner and less emotive language of Tillotson and Dryden<sup>1</sup> took its place. Rhetorical writing, in fact, especially when highly charged with metaphor, became, as Mrs. Bennett suggests, suspect and even repellent to the new generation, for it was held that it made the statement of facts difficult (which of course it often did); though Dryden himself, whose business was with literature and not with science, was conscious that language had become poorer as it had become more 'correct'. He hints at this in prologues written before and after his *Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence* (1677), to which Mrs. Bennett alludes.

What Mrs. Bennett calls a new way of looking at the world, or 'the concrete nature of experimental philosophy', as it has been defined, of necessity helped to modify the language. Sir Thomas Browne's poetical musings on his dying patient in *A Letter to a Friend* are very different from the exact clinical pictures of Sydenham, and the language of one would have been quite inappropriate to the other. I mention Sydenham because he presents a curious contrast to Browne, and the two men serve as a warning against attempting strict chronology in a history of style. Sydenham's description of the gout is still used in medical textbooks: a modern writer on medicine would hardly be likely to speak, as Browne does, of the Spring as the 'time of the year when the leaves of the fig-tree resemble a daw's claw'. Yet *A Letter to a Friend*<sup>2</sup> was not written till after two of Sydenham's books had been published.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Congreve in his edition of Dryden's plays (1717) says: 'I have heard Dryden frequently own with pleasure that if he had any talent for English prose it was owing to his having read the writings of Tillotson'. It is hardly ever safe to take Dryden quite at his word, and it is not easy to understand what he meant by this. His prose was essentially the same in the dedication of *The Rival Ladies* (1664) as it was in the *Fables* (1700). Tillotson published one famous sermon in 1664, but little or nothing before then. The description of Tillotson's style given by Thomas Birch in his *Life of the Archbishop* (1752) serves, with some modification, for a description of Dryden's prose. A modern reader would be aware of a difference in the two styles.

<sup>2</sup> *A Letter to a Friend* was published in 1690. Browne had died in 1682.

<sup>3</sup> The writings of Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) were first printed in Latin. His works were translated into English in 1695. Dr. Payne (*D. N. B.*) says that Sydenham himself wrote a plain English style.

There was also a general tidying-up of prose which is shown in Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesie*. In the second edition, published in 1684, he was more careful about the relative pronoun and about syntax generally than he had been in the first edition of 1668. He re-wrote several of the sentences so that prepositions might not be left at the end of them.<sup>1</sup>

Sir William Craigie tells me that the meaning of words tended to become crystallized, and to be less dependent on their context, about 1675.

But when all this has been granted we must not, as I have said, forget that along with prose which acted or was intended to act directly on the emotions,<sup>2</sup> or was merely eccentric, there was produced plenty of simple work-a-day prose which was close to spoken English. Dean Milman's statement in *The Annals of St. Paul's* (2nd ed. 1869) 'that there was as complete anarchy in the prose as in the religion of the land' cannot be sustained.

Mrs. Bennett quotes passages from Hobbes and Eachard urging the necessity of perspicuous language or warning against extravagant metaphors. This was really an old topic, for, to take two instances at random, Roger Ascham had complained in *The Scholemaster* (1570) of the 'strange and inkhorne terms' in Hall's *Chronicles*; and Ben Jonson in his *Discoveries* had said that 'the chief virtue of style is perspicuity'. No doubt Hobbes and Eachard had good reasons for what they wrote, but the inference to be drawn from their remarks, as from Sprat's directions, should, I think, be limited. Though Hobbes was speaking of language generally, he probably had in mind the necessity for extreme precision of language when writing on subjects such as psychology, political theory and so on, in which he was specially interested. Eachard's attack was directed against the clergy, who have always been liable to use florid language in the pulpit.<sup>4</sup> A famous Oxford preacher, who became Headmaster of Rugby, used about 1840 such sentences as 'Let the scintillations of your wit be like the coruscations of summer lightning, lambent but innocuous'; and only the other day, before the eight-o'clock news, people were told 'to sterilize their minds with the antiseptic of truth'.

N.B.  
(1675)

<sup>1</sup> Dryden seems to have believed that he was breaking some rule when he allowed his sentences to end with prepositions. He was considerably influenced by French writers. Indeed, the growing importance of French classical literature, and possibly the fact that some English writers had lived in France during the Commonwealth, may have had an influence on English prose. In the *Defence of the Epilogue* (1672) Dryden speaks of the placing of prepositions at the end of the sentences as being a common fault with Jonson 'and which I have but lately observed in my own writings'. In this important essay he also refers to an alteration in the language 'since the writers of the last age' and to the connection between writing and conversation.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to be precise here, as all good prose must, I suppose, to some extent be emotive.

<sup>3</sup> I quote Milman because he has a good passage on Tillotson.

<sup>4</sup> Dryden in his *Defence of the Epilogue* (1672) remarks that the clergy 'are commonly the first corrupters of eloquence, and the last reformed from vicious oratory'.

I cannot do more in a short article than remind readers of a very few of the authors of the first half of the seventeenth century whose style was simple in construction, and free from conceits, recondite words and far-fetched metaphors. The syntax was less stabilized and the sentences were often somewhat stiffer than they became after Dryden's influence had made itself felt, but if one allows for this and for the personal idiosyncrasy of each writer, it is probable that as much simple prose was written between 1600 and 1660 as prose which was elaborate or pedantic. I am not so much concerned with the value of the simple prose of this period, as with its existence.

In Elizabethan times Deloney, whose stories must have been representative of a good deal of popular fiction, and were themselves widely read by the middle classes, wrote simply enough, as almost any passage from *Jack of Newbury* will show :

At length the guests being come, the widow bade them all heartily welcome. The Priest and the Tanner seeing the Taylor, mused what he made there: the Taylor on the other side, marvelled as much at their presence. Thus looking strangely one at another, at length the widow came out of the kitchen in a fair train gown stuck full of silver pins, a fine white cap on her head, with cuts of curious needle work under the same and an apron before her as white as the driven snow: then very modestly making curtsey to them all she requested them to sit down.

Many of the dramatists, in their prose passages, use ordinary English idiom. Apart from the clue given by an occasional word it would frequently be difficult to assign a date to them. Middleton perhaps, in particular, exemplifies this. Bacon himself is an outstanding example of the variety of English which a single author might have at his command. He is aphoristic, though of course lucid, in his *Essays*. He is lucid, even if his language is somewhat latinized, in *The Advancement of Learning*; and in *The New Atlantis* he is simplicity itself:

We sailed from Peru (where we had continued by the space of one whole year), for China and Japan, by the South Sea; taking with us victuals for twelve months; and had good winds from the east, though soft and weak, for five months space and more. But then the wind came about, and settled in the west for many days, so we could make little or no way, and were sometimes in purpose to turn back. But then again there arose strong and great winds from the south with a point east, which carried us up (for all that we could do) towards the north; by which time our victuals failed us, though we had made good spare of them. . . . And it came to pass that the next day about evening, we saw within a kenning before us, towards the north, as it were thick clouds, which did put us in some hope of land; knowing how that part of the South Sea was utterly unknown; and might have islands or continents, that hitherto, were not come to light.

It might be supposed that public speeches would contain an

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in  
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abnormal amount of rhetoric at this time, but a glance through the collection of *British Orations*<sup>1</sup> will show that the speeches of Sir John Eliot in 1628, Strafford in 1641, and Charles I in 1642, are not more ornate than those delivered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Here is a short passage from Eliot.

For the next undertaking, at Rhé, I will not trouble you much; only this in short. Was not that whole action carried against the judgment and opinion of those that were of the council? Was not the first, was not the last, was not all in the landing—in the intrenching—in the continuance there—in the assault—in the retreat—without their assent? Did any advice take place of such as were of the council?

Howell in his *Familiar Letters* (except for an occasional pedantic word), Ludlow in his *Memoirs*, and Shaftesbury<sup>2</sup> in his character of Henry Hastings, use direct and plain language which is free from extravagant expressions. Bunyan's language was in part the language of the Bible, but, as Sir Charles Firth<sup>3</sup> says, he 'also used the everyday language of the seventeenth-century workman or shopkeeper, which was a much more homely and less dignified dialect than the language of the Bible'. His style was inherent in him, as anyone can see if he will turn to his first book, *Some Gospel Truths Opened* (1656).

Izaak Walton is perhaps too obvious to need mention. His vocabulary is modern and his style lucid; in fact his prose is so limpid and easy that he is perhaps sometimes overlooked, because of the difficulty of saying much about him. But individual as his style is, he is not unique, and *The Complete Angler* (1653) and his *Lives of Donne* (1640) and *Wotton* (1651) are as much part of English literature as the prose of Milton and Donne. What Sir Herbert Grierson long ago called 'the unconventional purity and naturalness' of the metaphysical poets and 'a diction equally appropriate to prose and verse' could not possibly have been absent from the prose written when the metaphysical poets flourished. It is to be found in George Herbert's *Country Parson* written soon after 1630 as well as in Walton's writings. Hobbes, unlike Eachard writing twenty years later, followed his own precepts. His sentences are pre-Dryden, but his language is bare and is as clear as language can be. His eloquence, when he is eloquent, arises, I suppose, in part from his extraordinary directness, as in the famous passage in *Leviathan* (1651) on a state of war.

In such condition there is no place for Industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the Earth: no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no

<sup>1</sup> *Everyman's Library*.

<sup>2</sup> Ludlow's *Memoirs* and Shaftesbury's 'character' were published after the Restoration, but Ludlow was in exile and Shaftesbury had been born in 1621.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays Historical and Literary*, 1938.



knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

It would be tedious to continue with examples. I will only suggest that a great deal of our prose, whether it is what is called literary or not, has at all times corresponded closely to the spoken language. No one can suggest want of directness and lucidity in the reported talk of Ben Jonson and Selden. It is doubtless the conversational element in style which has kept a great part of our written language substantially unchanged, whatever diction some authors of outstanding powers may have chosen to adopt.

It would be interesting to enquire how far the rhetorical style was directly due to the kind of teaching given in schools and Universities. Much of the language of the clergy to which Eachard takes exception was probably the pulpit language of ex-Fellows of Colleges who had taken livings. Donne, Milton, and Jeremy Taylor were learned men in a way which Dryden, though a King's Scholar at Westminster and a Trinity man, was not. Euphuism and irrelevant learning were common in the writings of the Elizabethans who had been to the Universities. An enlargement of the curriculum took place, at any rate at Oxford, between 1600 and 1650, though this was only part of the growing interest in science.<sup>1</sup>

### III

To introduce my second point—the influence which political pamphleteering and journalism had on the simplifying of prose—I will quote two passages chosen, more or less at random, from political pamphlets written respectively in 1643 and 1650. They are typical of much prose of the period.

Sir David Watkins told me, if I would leave the papers with him he would ask a friend of his and take advice; the next day I brought them to him, and he told me he did conceive many of the questions were good ways for a peace, and that Parliament and City must first be moved in it, and for the present he would not do anything in it, but would not speak of it to anyone, but wished it might bring a good peace, and said the Excise would give content to both. Whereupon I told Mr. Riley that I would desire Sir Basil Brook to see if he could procure his Majesty's Letter to the Parliament or City to desire accommodation.

The following is taken from Thomas May's account of the Civil Wars, printed in 1650. May was a professional writer who, among other things, translated Lucan.

This battle was the happiest of all other to the Parliament; the victory absolute and undoubted: and almost five thousand prisoners carried to London; the King's standard and one hundred other colours were taken with all their ordnance; and a very rich booty, a great quantity of gold and silver, and all the

<sup>1</sup> Croom Robertson's *Hobbes*.

modern!  
←  
1650!



secret letters of the King, came by this means into the Conqueror's hands. But so few were slain in this battle, that a reader may justly wonder, how so many prisoners should be taken, and so much wealth purchased, with loss of so little blood; for on the King's side scarce four hundred were slain, on the Parliament's scarce an hundred. Cromwell with his horse pursued the vanquished Royalists, who fled apace, and betook themselves to divers of their own garrisons, and bringing back a great number of prisoners, returned to the General, who now marched with his victorious army to Leicester, which was soon rendered to him.

These passages may be humdrum, but they are free from affectation, clear in meaning, and written in serviceable English.

The effect of political pamphlets and journalism in extending the use of simple prose, so that it became almost universal, must have been very great.<sup>1</sup> Whatever contributory influence the new approach to the physical sciences may have had, I believe that an earlier and greater influence was exerted by pamphlet literature.

Pamphlets and news-sheets had, of course, existed in Elizabethan times, but it was the paper controversy, which was waged at the same time as the actual hostilities, that gave them their importance among the people at large. The pamphlets were not always written in unadorned English, for an exaggerated biblical phraseology was not uncommon,<sup>2</sup> but on the whole, as Mr. Godfrey Davies<sup>3</sup> says, 'the pamphleteers were forced to adopt a simple and plain style in order to make a popular appeal'. The writers were as fully conscious of the need for an unambiguous style for their purpose as was Sprat for his. Of course the style varied somewhat in the degree of simplicity, according to the class of reader aimed at. The author of *Good English: Or, Certain Reasons Pointing out the safest way to a Settlement in the Kingdom* (1648) says: 'I have sent it abroad in a more homely stile than usual, that it may find entertainment in the meanest capacities'.

Among the writers who were both pamphleteers and journalists, the most influential, so far as prose style is concerned, was Sir Roger L'Estrange. His own style was the reflexion of his personality, which intruded itself into everything he did or said. He may in some ways have had more influence than Dryden, because, as his writing was on a far lower level of sensibility, it was easier to imitate. His style in his pamphlets is somewhat tiresome as it often produces the effect of noisy talk: it is nearly always on the same emotional plane, and he was a very controversial person. But with all his faults, and these were to a large extent inherent in his

<sup>1</sup> The Thomason Collection of tracts extending from 1641 to 1660 contains 22,000 pieces. In *The Cambridge History of English Literature* it is stated that more than half of these were the work of journalists.

<sup>2</sup> The speech of some of the Puritans described, or caricatured, in *Hudibras* naturally found its way into pamphlets.

<sup>3</sup> *The Early Stuarts*, 1937, p. 413. Davies mentions the popularity of books of travel with their matter-of-fact accounts in native words and idiom as being another factor in freeing language from artificiality.

subject, he was certainly the master of an extremely lucid English. He was born in 1616 and began writing at least as early as 1646. Kitchin<sup>1</sup> attributes seventy-two pamphlets and books to him. His paper *The Observator* (1681-7) was very widely read. After the Revolution L'Estrange produced a number of translations, including Æsop's *Fables*, Cicero's *Offices*, and Seneca's *Morals*. The importance of L'Estrange was recognized in the eighteenth century. Goldsmith<sup>2</sup> speaks of his 'elegance, ease and perspicuity'. J. H. Miller<sup>3</sup> did not exaggerate when he said of his Æsop that it possesses a humour, a vivacity and irresistible spirit and gusto which, combined with an inimitable vocabulary and the happiest gift of expression, make it a singularly entertaining and delightful book.

L'Estrange could not himself have affected English prose to any large extent before 1660. He is only a representative, though the most striking one, of men who had been producing pamphlets in great abundance since the abolition of the Court of Star Chamber in 1641. For a long time I have believed that pamphleteers and journalists and L'Estrange in particular must have exercised a very important influence on our prose, and quite recently I have discovered that this was the opinion of one who was fully qualified to judge. Professor Earle wrote in 1890:

The grandiose diction of classicism, which had culminated in Clarendon and Milton, was obviously unfit for the off-hand usage that was now required for journalism. For the chief instigation to journalism was to inform, indoctrinate, and propitiate the body of the people. It was a new departure; a wider class was to be addressed. A certain colloquial freedom, not to say a certain rudeness and roughness, was here appropriate. Moreover it must be remembered that the writing was to be achieved under new conditions. Not in the leisure of the well-stocked library, but anywhere and as he could the pamphleteer and journalist must write. For this it was that favoured the return of natural diction, the revival of the original old English Prose, of which we have only seen here and there a surviving waif since the fifteenth century . . . and the flagbearers of it are first of all the journalists L'Estrange and Defoe and then the allegorist Bunyan and the poet Dryden.<sup>4</sup>

As I have already tried to show, natural English prose was not lost to anything like the extent that Earle suggests, but that journalists were in large measure greatly responsible for its extended use is, I think, certain. It is not easy to select a passage from a pamphlet by L'Estrange likely to be of much interest now. The following sentences were written as late as 1680, but illustrates his style at a much earlier period. 'For a matter of two months last past, I have been pelted with libels, at the rate of

<sup>1</sup> *Sir Roger L'Estrange*, 1913.

<sup>2</sup> 'An account of the Augustan Age of England', *The Bee* (1759). John Hughes in 'Of Style', *Poems on Several Occasions with Select Essays* (1735), says that generally speaking his style 'is pleasant, smooth and natural'.

<sup>3</sup> *Craik's English Prose Selections*, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> *English Prose: Its Elements, History and Usage*. By John Earle, Rawlinsonian Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Oxford, 1890.

two or three libels a week, one with another. But who, what or where the libellers are is only known to their own good Lord, the father of lies and calumnies'.

L'Estrange died in 1704 and in the next year a verse tract was published with the following title: *Luctus Britannici, A Poem, To the Memory of Sir Roger L'Estrange the Late most Ingenious Refiner of the English Tongue*.<sup>1</sup> It was written 'By a gentleman of the University of Cambridge'. Who this gentleman was I do not know, but I believe the title of his pamphlet was well chosen.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have seen only one copy of this pamphlet: it is in the Bodleian.

<sup>2</sup> It is possible that Butler's *Hudibras*, which was extremely popular in the years 1663 onwards, may have affected prose. For, as Hume says, 'scarcely any author was ever able to express his thoughts in so few words'. When Butler uses 'metaphysical' language and odd words they are used for burlesque. He was a very great master of simple English whenever he wanted to be. Parts of *Hudibras* were probably written in the late 1640's.

## SAMUEL JOHNSON'S POEMS<sup>1</sup>

BY D. NICHOL SMITH

The occasion of what I have now to say is the recent publication by the Clarendon Press of an edition of the poems of Samuel Johnson. At no period since the days of Boswell has so much been added to our knowledge of Johnson as during the time while this edition has been in preparation. The Boswell papers have been brought from the obscurity of Malahide Castle by Colonel Isham. Most of the papers left by Mrs. Thrale—which are of greater value to an editor of the poems—are now accessible, whether in the Rylands Library or the Huntington Library, and other manuscripts have trickled into the auction room. Poems of which the existence was unsuspected have been put up for sale, and have passed to America. One of these is the early 'Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude', to which there is no parallel in the rest of Johnson's extant verse. In it he gave scope to poetic fervour in a way which he never allowed himself again. When I showed it to my friend Lascelles Abercrombie and asked him who was the author of this unknown poem he replied at once, 'Why, Christopher Smart'. It was a reasonable mistake. The poem is written in the stanza of the 'Song to David', and it has a lift and a surge that remind us of that Song, which was not written till twenty years later.

Thrice happy Saints—where do I rove?  
Where doth extatick fury move  
My rude unpolish'd song;  
Mine unharmonious verse profanes  
Those names which in immortal strains  
Angelick choirs have sung.

Henceforward Johnson was to hold his 'extatick fury' in control. That he ever indulged it, even in his school-days, *we* did not know. I say *we*, for there is good reason to believe that Boswell saw this poem and passed it over—passed it over in favour of other early pieces which gave a clearer indication of Johnson's mature manner.

In addition to poems that are wholly new to us the trickle has included the manuscripts of a few poems that have been printed. The trickle is only a trickle, with long breaks, but there it is, and how are we to account for it? I am completely at a loss. The manuscripts have appeared in Sotheby's catalogues as coming from unnamed private collections. I do not know if they have come from more than one collection. Sotheby no doubt could tell us, but good auctioneers are good allies of vendors who prefer to remain anonymous.

<sup>1</sup> An address to the Johnson Club, London, 11 December 1941.

Johnson's manuscripts raise an interesting problem. He is said to have destroyed his papers shortly before his death; and I think we must accept it that he disposed of all the papers which came readily to his hands. Of his major poems, *London* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, and the Prologues, we need never hope to find the manuscripts. They may have been destroyed by the printer; that it was the regular custom in the eighteenth century, as it is now, for a printer to return a manuscript when he was done with it, has not been established. We shall not be rash in saying that we have no final manuscript of any poem that Johnson himself sent to the printer, just as we have no manuscript of any *Rambler* or *Idler*, or of *Rasselas*. But it is now clear that more manuscripts of his poems have survived than was at one time thought. We have twenty-six—some of them mere scraps.

His Latin poems were edited after his death by Bennet Langton, and there is good evidence that Langton retained the manuscripts. One was given to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe by Langton's son, and another was shown to Croker by Langton's grandson. More than that, a little piece of Latin verse which has recently come to light, and is now in America, is one of the translations from the Greek Anthology which Langton sent to the press, to be included in the collection of Johnson's works edited by Hawkins. Johnson translated into Latin between ninety and a hundred of the epigrams in the Anthology, and of all the manuscripts of these translations only one is now known to survive. As its recent emergence was unexpected we had better not assume that it is the only one still in existence. Unfortunately the Langton family are now unable to give us any information about the manuscripts which appear to have been in their possession.

Much the same has to be said of the manuscripts of the English poems which Hawkins used. Some have come into the sale-room, but others have still to be sought for. And when Boswell refers to manuscripts which he has seen, that is sometimes the last that we hear of them. He tells us that by the kindness of friends he had 'obtained a considerable collection' of poems written in Johnson's early days. I do not know what force to attach to 'obtained'. At all events he printed in the *Life* seven of the pieces in this considerable collection, and we now know, thanks to the activities of the sale-room, that he had at least thirteen to choose from. The six additional manuscripts are all accessible, but the seven which he used have still to be found.

All this leads us to the conclusion that we need not give up hope of recovering more manuscripts of poems, whether printed<sup>1</sup> or unprinted. But where they are to come from, who knows?

<sup>1</sup> There are two books for which we should keep our eyes open—a copy of the fifth edition of *London*, 1750, and a copy of the original edition of *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, 1749. Johnson read these copies some years after they were printed, and made corrections in them, and notes. Hawkins used them for his text of both poems, as is shown by some

Johnson's verse covers his whole life, from his school days till within a week of his death. His last poem bears the date 5 December 1784. Let us not lose sight of this, that on his death-bed he should have chosen to write verse, or rather wrote it without exercising any choice. We think of him as a prose man, and we are not wrong in so doing. But we must not forget the great number of occasions, throughout all his life, when his thoughts found their natural expression in verse. I believe it to be a common view that his greater poems—and *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is a very great poem which stands by itself in all our literature—were wrung from this prose man with an effort, that his verse in general was produced by the methodical process of measuring syllables. Why he should have been moved to indulge in this process, what satisfaction he found in it that prose could not give, are questions which open up the wider question of the nature of poetry, and that need not detain us. We may follow the example that he set us in his *Life of Pope* and ask, if the greater passages of *The Vanity of Human Wishes* are not poetry, where is poetry to be found?

Some of us may be tempted to apply to him his own comments on the verses of Richard Bentley. We are told by Boswell, who was putting in his own words what he had heard from Langton, that Johnson one day gave high praise to Bentley's verses in Dodsley's *Collection* and recited them with his usual energy. Adam Smith, who was present, observed in his decisive professorial manner, 'Very well—very well'. Whereupon Johnson added, 'Yes, they *are* very well, Sir; but you may observe in what manner they are well. They are the forcible verses of a man of a strong mind, but not accustomed to write verse'.

Now that, I think, is what many people are disposed to say of his own. Yet the complete collection of his poems, as complete as it can at present be made, and arranged in the order in which they were written, shows that he dropped into verse all his life, humorously, or lightheartedly, or seriously, and at times gravely when he was deeply moved. There were thoughts and feelings which asked for utterance in verse and for which it was the only language.

When I recently ventured to express the opinion that the whole body of his poems affords us as true and vivid a picture of his mind as we gain from his prose, it was challenged, in the ease of conversation, by a friend who wondered if I had not been betrayed into an overstatement. But that is an opinion by which I am prepared to abide. Let us be frank with ourselves and admit that our picture of Johnson is usually derived from

of his readings. They have disappeared, but the younger James Boswell transcribed the notes and corrections into his copy of the collected edition of the poems published in 1789, and this copy has been preserved. Croker owned it at one time. By means of it we are able to explain why Hawkins's text differs from that of the life-time editions, and to establish the Johnsonian authorship of most of the notes.



Boswell—that is, in the main, from the records of his talk. I do not think that many of us have derived it mainly from his prose writings. But in his poems, whether deliberate pieces or mere scraps of verse, we catch glimpses of facets which he did not mean to reveal in prose intended for the public; and this, I think, is not too bold a distinction, that he wrote his prose for the public, as most people do, and that in much of his verse he wrote for himself or for his closest friends. His minor pieces, which he never hoped to see printed, have more to tell us about himself than we might have expected.

But in order to get this picture at its truest, we have to read his Latin verse as well as his English. Latin was a living language to Johnson, and it was the language which he preferred for the expression of certain moods and feelings. His very last poem, written on his death-bed, was in Latin. When he has finished revising the *Dictionary* for its fourth edition and muses on the drudgery which it has cost him, and the listlessness and depression which have followed, he writes in Latin. I quote from the expanded translation by Arthur Murphy:

The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,  
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.  
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain  
Black Melancholy pours her morbid train.  
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,  
I seek at midnight clubs the social band;  
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspires,  
Where Comus revels, and where wine inspires,  
Delight no more: I seek my lonely bed,  
And call on Sleep to sooth my languid head.  
But Sleep from these sad lids flies far away;  
I mourn all night, and dread the coming day.

Such a confession of his state of mind, such matter so intimately personal, Johnson could not have paraded before English readers. Or when on a visit to Lichfield late in life he recalls how in his happy childhood he was taught to swim by his father in a pool that was overhung with trees and I suspect became more umbrageous as he viewed it through the mists of memory, again Latin is necessarily his language. Poems about himself and his feelings he did not write in English. If we take all his English poems that most readily occur to us—*London*, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, the verses to Sir John Lade and on the Death of Dr. Robert Levet, and the Prologues—in not one of them does he speak directly about himself, though personal experience sometimes lies clearly behind what he says.

Two cant words in modern criticism are 'romantic' and 'classical',—cant words, I borrow his own phrase; but he did not apply it to them, for he did not recognize the distinction implied in these handy labels which have saved clear thinking and introduced much confusion. I should like to

have heard him giving his views of these two words, so dear to critics for the last hundred years. Some of us to-day are far from sure what they mean. But assuming for the moment that there is a clear distinction between the 'classical' and the 'romantic', that impersonality is the prerogative of the one, and that the other takes under its wing the more intimate individual experiences with their evanescent shades of feeling, we shall then have to say that Johnson wrote his 'romantic' poems in Latin and his 'classical' poems in English. By any definition of the term that I know some of his Latin poems are 'romantic'. But it is a term of which I wish that we were rid.

In his Latin there is a considerable body of verse which is represented in English only by that early piece to which I have already alluded, 'Upon the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude'. He frequently expressed his dislike of religious poetry, and he wrote against it in the *Lives of the Poets*. 'In sacred poetry who has succeeded?' he asks. 'Let no pious ear be offended if I advance, in opposition to many authorities, that poetical devotion cannot often please'. 'From poetry the reader justly expects, and from good poetry always obtains, the enlargement of his comprehension and elevation of his fancy; but this is rarely to be hoped by Christians from metrical devotion'. 'It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well'. Johnson spoke from long experience both as writer and reader, for his own religious verses belong to widely separated periods of his life, though mainly to the time of the *Lives of the Poets*. We need not make any claims for them which he himself would not have made. Many of the pieces are based on collects, such as the death-bed verses. Their outstanding quality is their earnestness and intimate humility. What we need no longer ignore is that they are preserved for us in sufficient numbers to rank him as a religious poet, though a minor one. But they are all, after his school-days, in Latin.

So far I have said little about his English poems. His slighter pieces, most of which have been preserved for us by Mrs. Thrale, we may be tempted to pass by, because they are slight. But they represent the gay and jovial side of his nature, which I rather think we should not know so well without them. At least one of them was written in 'a fit of frolicsome gaiety'. He was never quite so frolicsomenely gay in the company of Boswell as in that of the witty, attractive, responsive, vexing Mrs. Thrale. He was completely at his ease with Boswell, but he always knew what Boswell was about, and he was less disposed to mere clever fun in Boswell's company, when the note-book was never far away, than in that of his less methodical and more occupied hostess. Baretti remarked on Johnson's power of improvisation; he can do it as well, he said, as any Italian of us all if he pleases. We should have known less about this power had Mrs. Thrale not jotted down her recollections at her leisure.

The verses on Mr. Thrale's nephew, Sir John Lade—

Long-expected one and twenty  
Ling'ring year at last is flown—

were written for Mrs. Thrale. On sending them to her he wrote :

I have enclosed a short song of congratulation, which you must not shew to any body. It is odd that it should come into any body's head. I hope you will read it with candour; it is, I believe, one of the authour's first essays in that way of writing, and a beginner is always to be treated with tenderness.

Johnson was then over seventy. It has been suggested that A. E. Housman knew this poem, and was in some way indebted to it; but such evidence as I have seen is inconclusive.

His first and only elegy, 'On the Death of Dr. Levet', was wrung from him a year or two later by his deep sense of personal loss. It is not a studied work, as our greater elegies are, and, unlike them, it confines itself strictly in its few stanzas to its simple and unpromising theme. Though not to be compared with them, it helps us to understand what Johnson looked for in an elegy, and failed to find in *Lycidas*. The sense of loss is shot through every line of this earnest record of the virtues of an awkward friend who had employed well 'the single talent', and makes the whole poem glow with the warmth of natural sentiment. Of Collins, let me remind you, Johnson said that he did not sufficiently cultivate sentiment; of Dryden, that he studied rather than felt, and produced sentiments not such as Nature enforces, but meditation supplies. Again we have to say that what Johnson missed in the poems of others was not always lacking in his own. The elegiac note is to be heard also in his few epitaphs, a form of composition which first engaged his attention as a critic—his 'Essay on Epitaphs' was his first critical essay—and for which he was eminently suited. When his epitaphs are mentioned we think of the prose epitaph on Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. We should not forget the verse epitaph on Claudy Phillips, the strolling musician.

But when all is said, Johnson owes his fame as a poet to *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. Probably no passage in it is better known than the character sketch of Charles XII of Sweden, and it was never more apposite than at the present day :

Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;  
'Think nothing gain'd', he cries, 'till nought remain,  
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,  
And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'  
The march begins in military state,  
And nations on his eye suspended wait;  
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,  
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost.

The rest we know.

The most highly emotional passage in this poem paints the afflictions which await even on virtuous old age:

Year chases year, decay pursues decay,  
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;  
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,  
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,  
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,  
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

'The deep and pathetic morality of this poem', said Sir Walter Scott, 'has often extracted tears from those whose eyes wander dry over pages professedly sentimental'. We are told by Mrs. Thrale that the account of the life of the scholar in this poem extracted tears from Johnson's own eyes, that he 'burst into a passion of tears', when one day at Streatham he came upon it afresh late in life.<sup>1</sup>

Let us recall Johnson's remark about Bentley, which some of his critics would apply to his own verses—'the forcible verses of a man of a strong mind, but not accustomed to write verse'. We may now put the concluding phrase out of account; Johnson, though a prose man, was accustomed to write verse, and his heroic couplets, as in these passages which I have just quoted, have a resonant music of their own, distinct from the music of the verses of Dryden and Pope. There remains the question whether the 'strong mind' dominates his verse to the overshadowing of the more obvious poetic qualities. Certainly we never feel the loosening of the intellectual grip in any of his poems. But no one who reads *The Vanity of Human Wishes* aright ever ends it, I believe, without being most of all impressed by its emotional quality. In this poem Johnson shows himself to be a master of pathos. The forces of intellect and emotion are displayed in perfect balance.

<sup>1</sup> Boswell was off his guard when he cited Johnson's character of Dryden to show that it gives 'some touches of his own'. He rounded off the citation with this unconsidered assertion: 'It may indeed be observed, that in all the numerous writings of Johnson, whether in prose or verse, and even in his Tragedy, of which the subject is the distress of an unfortunate Princess, there is not a single passage that ever drew a tear' (*Life*, iv, 45).

## THE DALRYMPLE LEGEND IN *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR*<sup>1</sup>

BY COLEMAN O. PARSONS

Sir Walter Scott's narrative art in *The Bride of Lammermoor* cannot be fully appreciated without a consideration of the family legend on which the plot is based. This witchcraft tale of the Dalrymples early attracted both literary and popular interest, but enquiries seem to have been met by a conspiracy of embarrassed family silence. On 19 June 1700, Dr. George Hickes wrote to Samuel Pepys that, some twenty-two years before, he had heard 'a very tragicall but authentick story' of witchcraft related by the Duke of Lauderdale and also by Lord President Stair—the latter 'with a very dismall melancholick air',—in whose family it had happened. As Dr. Hickes could not trust his memory, he suggested that his friend should ask Lord Reay to make enquiry of the heir of the Dalrymple line about the 'memorable story . . . of great authority'. Not long after receiving this hint, the diarist drafted a letter to George Mackay, third Baron Reay, in which he made the following note: 'Enquire of the heir of Sir John Dalrymple, Laird of Stairs, late Lord President, after a tragical story, etc., relating to witches'. Pepys seems to have got no immediate satisfaction, for he wrote Dr. Hickes on 2 August 1700, that he would repeat his demands of Lord Reay.<sup>2</sup>

The story which stimulated Samuel Pepys's curiosity took deep root in the Gallovidian imagination, where it grew into a legend of exceptional emotional power. As such it was often repeated to Scott by his mother and also by Mrs. Margaret Swinton, Mrs. Anne Murray Keith, and William Clerk. The unadorned facts behind the tale are these: Janet Dalrymple was married to David Dunbar, younger, of Baldoon, on 12 August 1669; she was taken from her parents' house of Carscreugh to her bridal home on 24 August; there she died suddenly on 12 September and was buried eighteen days later.<sup>3</sup> This tragic and unaccountable event, taking place

<sup>1</sup> Owing to delays in the trans-Atlantic mails, the author has been unable to read proofs.—Ed., R.E.S.

<sup>2</sup> *Private Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Samuel Pepys 1679-1703*, ed. J. R. Tanner (London, 1926), I, 369, 212; II, 30-1. The editor conjecturally dates the draft 1699, but it must have been written between 19 June and 2 August 1700.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Symson, 'On the unexpected death of the vertuous Lady Mrs Janet Dalrymple Lady Baldone Younger', in a thirty-two page pamphlet containing thirteen elegies, usually bound with the poet's *Tripatriarchicon* (Edinburgh, 1705). See W. J. Couper, 'Andrew Symson Preacher, Printer and Poet', *Scottish Hist. Review*, XIII (1915), 62.

one month after the wedding day, found a prompt explanation in traditional gossip—Baldoon, in a mad seizure, had stabbed his bride.<sup>1</sup> By a singular corruption of fact and legend which occurs in a variant of this tradition, the bride of Baldoon is represented as having insisted on marrying against her witch mother's will. At last, Lady Stair exclaimed, 'Weel, ye may marry him, but sair shall ye repent it.' On the first night, shrieks came from the bridal chamber. The key was secured from the reluctant mother, the door thrown open, and the bride found on the bed soaked in her own blood. The husband, turned idiot, grinned from the chimney.<sup>2</sup> This I presume to have been the general outline of the witch story told to Dr. Hickes in 1678, some nine years after the death of Janet Dalrymple.

The Dalrymple legend exists in four versions, of which the first has just been summarized. According to the second, which Scott mainly followed, the girl was forced to marry Baldoon in spite of a previous engagement to that gentleman's uncle, Lord Rutherford, who was politically and monetarily unacceptable to her parents. Soon after the chamber door was locked on the unhappy couple, the bride stabbed her husband and went mad, crying out to those who forced an entrance, 'Tak' up your bonnie bridegroom'. Baldoon recovered but would never talk of the dreadful night.<sup>3</sup> Still a third version may be found in a letter of 5 September 1823, from Sir Robert Dalrymple Horn Elphinstone to Sir James Stewart of Coltness, both men being great-great-grandchildren of the bride of Baldoon's father, James, Viscount of Stair. The writer repeats the story much as it appears in the novel and then expresses regret at—

Sir Walter's not having been made acquainted with a tradition long current in the part of the country where the tragical event took place, namely, that from the window having been found open, it was conjectured that the lover had, during the bustle & confusion occasioned by the preparations for the marriage feast, and perhaps by the connivance of some servant of the family, contrived to gain admission and to secrete himself in the bridal chamber, from whence he had made his escape into the garden, after having fought with and severely wounded his successful rival—a conclusion strengthened by other concurring circumstances, and rendered more probable by the fact of young Baldoon having to his latest breath obstinately refused to give any explanation whatever on the subject, and which might justify a belief that he was actuated by a desire of concealing the particulars of a rencontre, the causes and consequences of which he might justly consider as equally discreditable to himself. The unfortunate lover was said to have disappeared immediately after the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sir Andrew Agnew, *The Hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway* (Edinburgh, 1893), II, 106-7; J. M. Graham, *Annals and Correspondence of the Viscount and the First and Second Earls of Stair* (Edinburgh and London, 1875), I, 43-9; *History of the Lands and their Owners in Galloway* (Edinburgh, 1870-9), I, 387; Thomas Murray, *The Literary History of Galloway*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1832), pp. 157-8; and Robert Chambers, *Illustrations of . . . Waverley*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1825), pp. 160-5.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Law, *Memorials*, ed. C. K. Sharpe (Edinburgh, 1819), p. 226, note.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



catastrophe, in a manner somewhat mysterious: but this part of the story has escaped my recollection.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth version differs from the others in not laying emphasis on Lady Stair as a prime mover in the tragedy. The bride had formerly plighted her troth to Rutherford and sworn that the devil, her master, was to possess her body and soul if she ever broke faith. When she married Baldoon, the devil came for his own and diverted himself by severely drubbing the venturesome bridegroom. Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw thus interprets the events in his vituperative 'Satyre on the Familie of Stairs':

So he of ane of his daughter's mariage gave the ward,  
Lyke a true vassell, to Glenlusse's Laird;  
He knew what she did to her master plight,  
If she her faith to Rutherford should slight;  
Which, lyke his own, for greid he brak outright.  
Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,  
And, as first substitute, did sease the bride.  
What e're he to his mistres did or said,  
He threw the bridegroom, from the nuptiall bed,  
Into the chimney did so his rivall maull,  
His bruised bones ne're cured but by the fall.  
The airie fiend, for Stairs hath land in Air,  
Possess another daughter for ther share,  
Who, without wings, can with her rumple flye.

.....  
It's not Stair's bairnes alone Nick doth infest,  
His children's children lykewise are possesset.<sup>2</sup>

Similar charges are brought by Robert Law, who complacently sets about wrecking character: 'At this same time [1682], in Sir John Dalrymple of New Listoun his house, son of the late President of the Session, two of his sons, young ones, pistols being lying on the table, one of them takes up

<sup>1</sup> Copy of the letter in the Constable Papers, MS. 683, ff. 45-7, National Library of Scotland. See also W. S. Crockett, *The Scott Originals*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1932), p. 256, note. A similar letter is quoted by William Clerk in a letter to Scott of 1 September 1829; see *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh, 1890), II, 300, n. 1; Andrew Lang's Introduction to the *Bride*; and Wilfrid Partington, *Sir Walter's Post-Bag* (London, 1932), pp. 275-6.

<sup>2</sup> *A Book of Scottish Pasquils &c.* (Edinburgh, 1827), pp. 53-4. Scott's copy of the satire had fuller marginal notes than that printed in 1827. One of these, ascribed to Hamilton's nephew, William Dunlop, reads: 'She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherford under horrid imprecations, and afterwards married Baldoon, his nevy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith'. The bridegroom's fall refers, of course, to Baldoon's fatal accident while riding between Leith and Holyrood on 20 March, 1682; see Andrew Symson's 'Funeral Elegie', *op. cit.*, and his *A Large Description of Galloway*, ed. Thomas Maitland (Edinburgh, 1823), pp. vii-viii. The possessed daughter of the satire was Sarah Dalrymple, who married Charles, Lord Crichton, afterwards Earl of Dumfries; she is mentioned by Law in the same connection. The children's children were Penelope, *suo jure* Countess of Dumfries, and Charles, Lord Cathcart, son of Elizabeth Dalrymple by her marriage to Allan, Lord Cathcart. Throughout Hamilton's satire, Stair is pictured as vacillating and two-faced, and his wife as domineering; Scott roughly adopted these popular caricatures for fictional purposes.

a pistol, and presents it to his brother and shoots it, wherewith he is killed. The president had a daughter before this time, being married, the night she was bride in; she was taken out from her bridegroom and harled through the house, and afterward died; another daughter was supposed to be possessed with an evil spirit'.<sup>1</sup> And when Mrs. Wodrow related a modified form of the fourth, or broken troth, version to the famous analectist, he faithfully and soberly noted it down:

My wife tells me she has this accompt from good hands: That the Laird of Baldoun, father, I think, to Lord Basile's [Lord Basil Hamilton's] Lady, was married to another woman, before her mother. His first lady, it seems, was under a promise and oath to another gentleman. However, shee had given him over. That day shee was contracted, her first choice came to the house, and was denied access; he desired but one word of the lady, and told he would not goe away till he gote it, and if it could noe otherwise be had, he would speak it before company. She came to the dore to him, and [he] diswaded her from going on, shouing her her subscribed promise to him. Shee would not hearken to him. Then he desired that she might remember he had warned her that Baldoun and shee would not long enjoy each other; and ther would be a sad accompt of her! Shee went on, and they wer married. That night they wer married, or in the morning after, they wer in bed, ther was a great noise heard, and when people came up she was gote at the dore sitting youling like a dogg, and he lying speechless in another part of the room! She continued youling and howling for some dayes, till she dyed, and he continued very ill, but after her death recovered.<sup>2</sup>

The demonological intervention hinted at by Law and Wodrow and more fully developed by Sir William Hamilton finds its echo in *The Bride of Lammermoor*: "And is it true then", mumbled the paralytic wretch, "that the bride was trailed out of her bed and up the chimley by evil spirits, and that the bridegroom's face was wrung round ahint him?" In these versions of Janet Dalrymple's marital tragedy, two separate, yet closely intertwined, narrative strands may be perceived. There is, first of all, an attempt on the part of legend-builders to make her sudden death vividly comprehensible by the introduction of some deed of violence. Then there is a further heightening of the effect by supernatural agency. The second strand, of no secret manufacture, was twisted by the personal and political enemies of the Dalrymples, a dreaded and detested house, which was composed throughout—according to George Lockhart—of absolute tyrants who 'had rose but lately from nothing'.<sup>3</sup>

James Dalrymple had been made a Lord of Session in 1657, knighted in 1661, created a Baronet in 1664, made Lord President in 1671 and a Privy Councillor of Scotland in 1674. Deprived of office from 1681 to 1688, he

<sup>1</sup> Law's *Memorials*, pp. 225-6. See T. B. Macaulay's *The History of England* (1848-61), chapter XIII, in which it is also stated that a son of the Lord President died by poison.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Wodrow, *Analecta: or, Materials for a History of Remarkable Providences*, Maitland Club (1842-3), I, 355.

<sup>3</sup> Lockhart, *Memoirs*, 3rd ed. (London, 1714), p. 96.

returned to power after the Revolution and received the titles of Viscount Stair, Lord Glenluce and Stranraer in 1690, five years before his death. His bitter opponents, with the crude force of seventeenth-century party invective, stigmatized his influence as derived from some hellish compact. Although the imputation particularly attached to his wife, a strong-minded, ambitious woman, it was generously interpreted to include himself, his daughters and their children. Among contemporary lampoons, Sir William Hamilton's 'Satyre' made Lady Stair out a witch who, in the form of a cat, appeared on the Duke of Hamilton's cushion in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, much more being confusedly added about hags, incubi, and devil offspring. Robert Mylne's annotation of the poem includes a passage to the effect that 'Sir Patrick Murray wes the representative of Stranraer in Parliament, put in ther by the Lady Stairs, to whom she promised Old Nick's assistance if he voted her way in Parliament; and accordingly, she ordered his ball . . . while at golfe. R. M.' Soon after the demise of that much maligned woman in 1692, a pasquinade appeared 'Upon the long wished for and tymely Death of the Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> The Lady Stair': Some kind devil has relieved us of this monstrous Witch of Endor; let the fiends of hell prepare a well-heated room for the Devil of Glenluce; rejoice, Duke of Hamilton, the cat that crossed your church cushion is no more; be at ease, Mrs. Turnbull, 'The dog is dead that toar your petticoat'; and as for you, Lady Crichton, 'Your flying days are done', now that the strongest pillar of the house has fallen.

And if her coffine in the grave be laid,  
Her bodie's roasted for the Devil's dinner.<sup>1</sup>

A versified libel on Stair's unpopular son, Sir John Dalrymple, who died on 8 January 1707, also recurs to the favourite topic of the sorceress mother:

A bratt of ane unburied Bitch,  
Gott by Belzebub on a witch,  
Whose malice oft wes wreckit at home,  
On the curst cubs of her owne womb.<sup>2</sup>

Because of its very persistence, this execration was absorbed into a popular legend, the sum of which is set down in a life of Lady Stair's grandson, written 'by an Impartial Hand':

He [James Dalrymple] married *Margaret*, Daughter to *Ross of Balxeel* [Balniel], with whom he got a good Estate; and the weaker sort of People say, that to this Woman is owing the present Grandeur of the *Dalrymple's* Family, they repute her nothing less than a Witch, and that she had made a Contract with the Devil, to raise her Husband and his Issue to the Heighth they are now

<sup>1</sup> *A Third Book of Scottish Pasquils &c.* (Edinburgh, 1828), pp. 75-7.

<sup>2</sup> 'Inscriptione for Lord Stair's Tomb', *A Second Book of Scottish Pasquils &c.* (Edinburgh, 1828), pp. 69-71.

arrived at, she lived to a great Age; and at her Death desired that she might not be put under Ground, but that her Coffin should stand upright on one End of it, promising that while she remain'd in that Situation the *Dalbrymple* should continue to flourish. What was the Old Lady's Motive for the Request, or whether she really made such a Promise, I shall not take upon me to determine, but its certain, her Coffin stands upright in the Isle of the Church of *Kirklistown*, the Burial-place belonging to the Family; and its probable the odd Position of her Corpse, and the sudden Rise of so many of that Name, without any very visible Reason, may give Occasion to that vulgar Conjecture, that the Lady was a Witch.<sup>1</sup>

The narrative materials used by Scott in *The Bride of Lammermoor* represent an earlier—perhaps oral and popular—fusion of the crude repute of diabolical confederacy which attached to Lady Stair with the legend which sensationally explained her daughter's sudden dissolution. Of the four versions in which the story appears, Scott seems to have become acquainted with the third only after the publication of his novel (1819), and, if he knew the first, to have rejected it as making the bridegroom the mere automaton of Lady Stair's magical power. He depended on an eclectic version which was probably pieced together in the eighteenth century out of the second and a modification of the fourth, the catastrophe being brought on by the mother's inhuman will and the daughters' fatal treachery. I suspect that the eclectic version, with its hackneyed theme of cruel parent, compliant child, and resultant tragedy, may have been influenced by William Sampson's *The Vow Breaker. Or, The Faire Maide of Clifton* (London, 1636), which was popularly circulated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in a chapbook rendering. In his 'Prologue to Censurers', the dramatist asserts the antiquity and the authenticity of his chronicle, 'truer ne're was told' (cf. Scott's 'ower true tale'—there was a copy of *The Vow Breaker* in the Abbotsford library), which goes back ninety years to actual events in Nottinghamshire.<sup>2</sup> The plot is briefly this: Before Young Bateman, a person of birth and breeding, though not of property, sets out for Leith to see the wars, Anne Boote voluntarily swears constancy to him, 'When I this hand bequeath to any one / But my sweete *Bateman*; then may I ever / From heaven, and goodnes rest a cast-away'. Bateman is even more emphatic, 'Alive or dead I shall enjoy thee then / Spite of thy fathers frownes'. They break a piece of gold between them, and the man fervently prays in case of perfidy on either side, 'Let us be made strange spectacles to the world' (cf. Rutherford's, 'For you, madam, you will be a world's wonder' and Ravenswood's more humane, 'I . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of the Life, Family, and Character of John late Earl of Stair* (London [1747]), pp. 7-8. Even in nineteenth-century tradition, Lady Stair retained her character as a witch; see *A Book of Scottish Pasquils*, 1568-1715, ed. James Maidment (Edinburgh, 1868), p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> Historical references to the fortification of Leith by the French partisans of Queen Mary help to place the action in 1560.

pray to God that you may not become a world's wonder for this act of wilful and deliberate perjury'). On returning from Scotland, Bateman learns that Anne Boote has given in to her father's persuasion and married old Germane for his money. He upbraids her, ominously repeating the terms of their troth, and then hangs himself in despair. His ghost returns to frighten Anne by pointing to the broken piece of gold and declaring that she is only safe from him while she is with child. The young wife becomes melancholy, her one fit companion being 'harsh Ravens croake'. While drunken midwives sleep, Young Bateman comes for his betrothed, who is later found drowned in the river. In the fifth act, Miles the miller returns to Clifton singing verses from 'a very mery lamentable dolefull new Ditty of young *Bateman*, and his *Nan*', thus fulfilling Ursula's implied prophecy (Act I), 'If young *Bateman* to whom I know tha'st vow'd thy faith should at thy falsehood fall into some malevolencies in himselfe, or on thee; t'wood greive thee to have Ballads made on thee, to the tune of the inconstant Lover, and have thy peruires pind one uery Post?' There may have been such a ballad in William Sampson's day.

In the chapbook version of the fable, Bateman is represented as gaining access to Isabella Gifford (Anne Boote no longer) disguised as a physician. He wounds his rival, who recovers and wins Isabella through the avarice of her parents. When the faithless girl's day of reckoning comes, she is borne through the casement by a being who leaves 'a strong smell of sulphur' in the room; the townspeople are startled from their sleep by great cries and shrieks, a clap of thunder, and flashes of lightning.<sup>1</sup>

The possibility that incidents from Bateman's history were assimilated to the Dalrymple legend which Scott elaborately retells in his Introduction (1830) to *The Bride of Lammermoor* does not alone rest on similarities in omen, prophecy, phrase, and plot incident. There is also the specific parallel of Janet Dalrymple and Lord Rutherford's breaking a gold piece together, their vowing constancy most solemnly, and the lady's praying for some dreadful calamity to fall on her if she proved untrue. In obedience to her mother, Janet later returned the emblematic gold fragment, upon which her lover predicted future misfortune.<sup>2</sup> The piece of gold is also employed effectively in the novel as a symbol of true love and abandoned troth.

<sup>1</sup> *The Historical Tragedy of Young Beateaman's Ghost, or the Perjured Maiden, Justly Rewarded* (n. p., ca. 1778); much tamer is the later chapbook, *Young Bateman's Ghost!* (Falkirk, 1817). See also *A Catalogue of Chap-Books, Garlands, and Popular Histories, in the possession of James Orchard Halliwell, Esq.* (London, 1849), p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to know whether the gold piece played a part in Scott's oral narrative, but Mrs. Hughes treats the tale very sketchily in her *Letters and Recollections of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. H. H. Hutchinson (London, 1904), pp. 279-80. For Scott's known use of the story in conversation, see *The Edinburgh Monthly Review*, II (1819), 180, note; cf. Lockhart's *Life* (1837-8), IV, 338.



With these narrative source materials fresh in mind, one sees that *The Bride of Lammermoor* not only has certain characteristics of Elizabethan tragedy and the medieval ballad, as critics have pointed out,<sup>1</sup> but that it also bears on it the marks of legends, political satire, and chapbook literature. Scott's problem was that of retaining the narrative economy and pace of these forms while avoiding their extremes of violence and sensationalism. Indeed, when Scott set about working the rude materials at his disposal into fictional shape, his basic concern was the artistic use of the supernatural. The narrative, if shorn of the supernatural, would have been trite and would certainly have lost much of its gloomy intensity; yet motivation which directly depended on witchcraft and diabolical retribution was grotesque. Although he realized the absurdity in which the exercise of sorcery by one of the chief characters would involve the story, Scott was unwilling to abandon the theme altogether, because of its wild effectiveness as a background to the heroine's madness. His solution was to allow the tragedy to unfold on two planes of consciousness, the realistic-romantic and the superstitious. The central figures move in the former plane, but sometimes descend to the latter, where—in the last third of the novel—they meet a band of weird women which acts as chorus to the catastrophe of the main action. The two levels of consciousness, or of interpretation of events, may be illustrated by the expression of different attitudes toward Lady Ashton, of whom the author says, 'The witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendancy of a powerful mind over a weak and melancholy one', and about whom the soured misanthropic hag, Ailsie Gourlay, exclaims: 'There's mair o' utter deevilry in that woman, as brave and fair-fashioned as she rides yonder, than in a' the Scotch witches that ever flew by moonlight ower North-Berwick Law . . . How likes he [Sir William] the witcheries of his ain dwelling-house?'

Thus the novelist maintains an effective duality of mood and action throughout his story. The leading characters of the *dramatis personæ* work out their human destinies against the dark background of witch lore and countryside superstitions in the subsidiary group of actors, such as sexton Johnnie Mortsheugh, old Alice Gray, and the three crones (Ailsie Gourlay, lame Annie Winnie, and an unnamed paralytic wretch). Despite several artistic lapses, multifarious and even disparate materials are harmonized in *The Bride of Lammermoor*; the necessary atmosphere of mysterious and foreboding gloom is created, with omens, presages, and spoken doom playing their inevitable part; and the narrative retains the vigorous and incisive movement of the original family legend.

See A. A. Jack, *Essays on the Novel* (London, 1897), pp. 26-30, 190-1, 195, 201-2; James Crichton-Browne, *Stray Leaves from a Physician's Portfolio* (London [1927]), pp. 43-51; and Thomas Seccombe in *Scott Centenary Articles* (London, 1932).



## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### NEW LIGHT ON ALEXANDER BARCLAY<sup>1</sup>

The biography of Alexander Barclay has been presented by T. H. Jamieson in the Essay which prefaces his edition of *The Ship of Fools*,<sup>2</sup> by Beatrice White in her Introduction to the Early English Text Society edition of the Eclogues,<sup>3</sup> and by *The Dictionary of National Biography*.<sup>4</sup> To these accounts a study of the episcopal registers preserved at Exeter and at Ely permits me to add a few new items.

A persistent crux has been the question of Barclay's birthplace. It has usually been argued that Barclay was of Scottish origin, a thesis supported by the testimony of several of his ancient biographers, by the fact that his language seems to be tinged with northern pigments, and by his laudatory references to the king of Scotland. White's proof of the existence of a family of Barclays in Gloucestershire, a district with which the poet shows considerable familiarity,<sup>5</sup> provides another possible birthplace. Discovery of the records of Barclay's ordination as subdeacon, deacon, and priest, however, disposes of the latter hypothesis and moves his home back north, though not north of the Tweed. The ordinations appear in the Register of Oldham, bishop of Exeter:<sup>6</sup>

Ordinations celebrated in the Chapel of the Bishop's Palace on 18 March, 1507-8. Subdeacons:

'Alexander Bercle lincolniensis diocesis per litteras sui diocesani sufficientes dimissorias ad titulum collegij beate marie de Otery per eundem Magistrum Scole admissus est'

*Ibid.*, 8 April 1508. Deacons:

'Alexander Bercle Lincolniensis diocesis ad titulum Collegij de Otery et per litteras sui diocesani sufficientes missas per dictum Magistrum Scole admissus est'

*Ibid.*, 22 April 1508.<sup>7</sup> Priests:

'Alexander Bercle lincolniensis diocesis per litteras dimissorias sufficientes missas ad titulum Collegij de Otery per dictum Magistrum Scole admissus est'

<sup>1</sup> Owing to delays in trans-Atlantic mails, the author has been unable to read the proof.

<sup>2</sup> Edinburgh, 1874.

<sup>3</sup> Original Series 175 (1928).

<sup>4</sup> In a recent issue of *Modern Language Review* XXXVII [1942], p. 198) L. S. Colchester notes some hitherto unrecorded information concerning Barclay as 'ludimagister' of the Cathedral School of Wells in 1547.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>6</sup> Volume XIII, fols. 92<sup>r</sup>, 95<sup>r</sup>, 95<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> The date of this ceremony is given as 'die Sabbti in vigilia pasche viz scdo die mensis Aprilis Anno dni Millmo quingentesimo octauo'. A modern note pencilled in the Register by E. L-W. points out that the date must be April 22 since Easter Day in 1508 fell on April 23.

Certainly this Alexander Bercle of the diocese of Lincoln who was sponsored by the College of St. Mary, Ottery, must be identified with the poet who, during the same year, was inditing *The Ship of Fools* within the walls of the same College.<sup>1</sup> The dimissorial letter which he presented to the admitting officer was a document which was required whenever a subject of one diocese was to be ordained in another. If the church law was followed in this case, Barclay must have been either a native of the see of Lincoln or an established resident of it. Perhaps a search of the Lincoln registers may yield more information concerning the poet's origin and his life; at present the records are inaccessible, having been put into a safe place for the duration of the war.

The Exeter episcopal register throws light also on a certain 'Sir John Bishop of Exeter' who is addressed in an amicable and jocular fashion in the chapter of *The Ship of Fools* entitled 'The description of a wise man'. Pompen, in his *English Versions of The Ship of Fools* (Section 110) suggests that Bishop's title imports not knighthood but priesthood. On December 4 1500, at the ordinations celebrated in the church of St. Mary, Ottery, John Byschopp of the diocese of Exeter was created deacon 'ad titulum collegij beate marie de Otery'.<sup>2</sup> His ordination as priest I have not found, but it seems altogether probable that the Bishop who became deacon under the 'title' of the College of St. Mary in 1500 was the Sir John Bishop who was, according to Barclay, 'the first ouersear' of *The Ship of Fools*.

In 1508 or 1509, soon after his ordination as priest, Barclay appears to have left St. Mary Ottery. This is implied by the statement following the dedication of *The Ship of Fools* (printed in 1509): 'This present Boke named the Shyp of folys of the worlde was translated in the College of saynt mary Otery . . . by Alexander Barclay Preste: and at that tyme Chaplen in the sayde College. translated the yere of our Lorde god. M. ccccc. viii.' Barclay's *Eclogues*, written about 1514, refer frequently to Ely and to its cathedral. In 1515, as the dedication of his *St. George's* to the bishop of Ely proves, Barclay was certainly a monk at the Benedictine monastery of Ely. Moreover certain records concerning monastic affairs which are included in the Ely episcopal register indicate that by 1516 Barclay was by no means a junior among the brothers, that he was in fact a well established and highly respected member of the community. It seems probable, then, that Barclay came to Ely shortly after his ordination in 1508.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Ship of Fools*, ed. Jamieson, I, cxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Register of Richard Redmayne, Vol. XII (2), fol. 42<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> This book is usually referred to as 'lost'. But see Sinkler, *A Catalogue of the English Books Printed before MDCI now in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1885), Item No. 22. I have submitted an edition of the *St. George* for publication by 'The Early English Text Society'.

In March 1516, Bishop Nicholas West descended in full episcopal wrath upon the monastery at Ely. He reported to Wolsey that the monastery was in disgraceful order and that he had appointed a new prior and other officers.<sup>1</sup> The official record which appears in the Bishop's register tells a less shocking story.<sup>2</sup> According to this testimony, William ffolyett the prior had, for some reason not divulged, freely and spontaneously resigned his position, and the monks therefore petitioned the Bishop for permission to elect a new prior. This request, the permission of the Bishop, and the narrative of the proceedings toward the election are all recorded in great detail. Were it not for West's letter to Wolsey and the extraordinary meticulousness of the document copied down in the register, nobody could suspect the underlying scandal. On March 29 1516 (the Bishop's letter is dated April 4) the monks assembled for the election. Barclay's name appears among the brothers then resident as the sixteenth in a list of thirty. '... et expedicione eleccionis huiusmodi inuicem conuenientes et capitulum facientes verbo dei per circumspectum et prouidum virum Alexandrum barkeley propositio inuocata erat spiritus sancti gratia per decantacionem impni veni creator spiritus'.<sup>3</sup> The new and 'freely chosen' prior was John Cottenham. The fact that that 'circumspect and provident man' Alexander Barclay was singled out for honour and mention at a time when the monks must have been desperately anxious to please their irate bishop suggests that the poet was in West's favour. Perhaps that favour was the fruit of Barclay's dedication of his *St. George* to Bishop West less than a year before the breaking of the monastic storm.

WILLIAM NELSON.

#### THE WORD 'MUING' IN MILTON'S *AREOPAGITICA* (1644)

Milton's phrase 'an Eagle muing her mighty youth'<sup>4</sup> presents a difficult problem for lexicographers, since it is hardly too much to say that the ordinary meaning of any one of the verbs *mew* which can be supported by quotations from other sources makes pure nonsense. The eagle can neither be moulting its mighty youth, nor cooping it up, nor endeavouring to express it by making a noise like a cat. If we assign to the verb any such meaning as 'change' or 'shed' (as horns are shed, or feathers in moulting) the trend of the passage then requires us to replace the words 'mighty youth' by 'feeble age'. The *O.E.D.* makes the comment and the cautious suggestion, 'the precise sense intended is difficult to determine: perhaps "to renew by the process of moulting"'. This makes sense indeed, but by some violence; for it is the imported word 'renew' which is necessary to the

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, II, No. 1733.

<sup>2</sup> Register of Nicholas West, fols. 55<sup>v</sup>-60<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 56<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Pickering's Aldine edition of 1851, IV. 441.

sense, while the words 'by the process of moulting' can be dropped without essentially affecting it. In the course of my enquiries Professor Maas supplied a reference by which the puzzle is rather increased than lessened. In the tract *Of Reformation*, some three years earlier than the *Areopagitica*, Milton writes: 'if they [the votarists of antiquity] will conform our Bishops to the purer times, they must mew their feathers, and their pounces, and make but curt-tailed Bishops of them'.<sup>1</sup> Here 'mew' is used, if not quite in the commonest sense of 'moult', in a nearly related causative sense: the quotation from Fletcher and Massinger in *O.E.D.* 1. c., at end, is a close parallel.

When a certain word fails to make sense if assigned any meaning that can be adduced from other authors or even from the same author in other passages, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the word in question may be a misreading. Consider the whole passage:—

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: Methinks I see her as an Eagle muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazl'd eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain it self of heav'nly radiance; . . .

The first simile seems to have been suggested by Psalm 78.65. in the Geneva version, 'But the Lord awaked as one out of slepe, and as a strong man that after his wine cryeth out'—it must be the Geneva version (1560), for the Authorised (1611) reads 'mighty man', and the Bishops' (1568), 'giaunt'.<sup>2</sup> The following words I fail to recognize as directly biblical, but 'invincible locks' must surely be an allusion to Samson, brought to mind by the words 'strong man', and 'shaking' may have been suggested by Judges 16.20: 'And he [Samson] awoke out of his slepe, and thoght, I wil go out now as at other times, & shake my selfe'. It seems clear that, while writing the passage, Milton's mind was full of biblical phrases and imagery. Can the next words be anything but another biblical reference, a reference to Psalm 103.5? The three versions that were current in Milton's day differ but little and read:

and thy youth is renued like the egles (Geneva 1560)

causyng thy youth lyke an Eagles to be renued (Bishops' 1568)

so that thy youth is renewed like the Eagles (Authorised 1611).

It seems to me almost impossible that Milton, writing *any* phrase about an eagle and the recovery of its youth, could fail to have this passage in his mind: and would he, a puritan with a puritan upbringing, have removed from the words of scripture the verb that the sense requires, to replace it by

<sup>1</sup> 1851 edn., III. 13; Professor Maas referred me to the Columbia University edition, 1931, III. 14.24.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aldis Wright's *Hexaplar Psalter*, Cambridge, at the University Press, 1911.

—of all things—a sporting term that does *not* make sense? The notion seems to me almost incredible. The modern reader very probably fails to recognize the allusion as biblical, not only because of 'muining', but because he is much more familiar with the Prayer Book psalter than with that of the A.V., and the Prayer Book, following the Great Bible (1539) and Coverdale (1535), reads 'making thee young and lusty as an eagle'. If he so fails, then 'muining' fails to jar as an impertinent interference with a biblical text. Feeling confident myself that the allusion *is* biblical, with all diffidence (for I am trespassing out of my own field) I suggest that 'muining' is an error of the press and that we should read 'renuing'. The verb is so strongly called for by the sense that, as already noted, the *O.E.D.* has to reintroduce it in its explanation, 'to *renew* by the process of moulting'. Nor am I the first to feel that the emendation is natural. It was made by William Warburton, as was kindly pointed out to me by Miss Helen Darbishire, in a clumsy paraphrase of the *Areopagitica* lines applied to the University of Oxford:<sup>1</sup>

Methinks I see her, like the mighty Eagle, renewing her *immortal Youth*, and purging her opening Sight, at the unobstructed Beams of our benign Meridian Sun; . . .

A number of questions obviously arise. In the first place would Milton have been likely to use the spelling 'renuing'? Some readers might be inclined to answer 'No' at once, on the ground that in all of the twenty-five occurrences of 'renew', 'renewed', 'renewing', and 'renews' entered in Bradshaw's *Concordance to the Poetical Works* (1894) the w-spelling is used, taking Beeching's edition (Humphrey Milford, 1913) as the authority. This does not seem to be a very strong argument, however, since the spellings 'profet', 'profets', occur in *Tetrachordon*<sup>2</sup> and yet the ph-spelling is used in all the twenty-four occurrences in the Poems of *prophet*, *prophets*, *prophetic* traced through the same concordance. The spelling *renuing* might then have been used in the *Areopagitica* although the modern form is used throughout the poems.

But clearly Milton would have been more likely to use the u-spelling if he happened to have before him, or still more mostly in his mind, a biblical version in which that spelling was used. It is at least odd in that connection that the words 'strong man after sleep' suggest the G.V. and the G.V. of 1560 uses the spelling *renued* in Psalm 103.5. But here one must be careful. The spelling of the G.V. 1560 was no more strictly maintained in later editions than was that of the A.V. 1611. I have not made any extensive investigation but have looked at three later editions that were at hand:

<sup>1</sup> The final paragraph in *A critical and philosophical enquiry into the causes of prodigies and miracles, as related by historians etc.*, 1727; not included in the 1788 edition of the *Works*, but reprinted by Parr in *Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian etc.*, London, 1789.

<sup>2</sup> 1851 edn., IV. 176, 177.



(1) Darlow and Moule p. 115, B: (2) Darlow and Moule p. 117, G, the 'Goose Bible'; both of these while of the nominal date 1599 are actually of uncertain date later than 1599 (cf. D. & M. note at foot of p. 117): (3) the edition of 1640. All these three editions have retained the u-spelling in Ps. 103.5, although the verb has been given the modern form, especially in editions (1) and (3), in a number of other texts. Even in the A.V., where the modern spelling is used in the Psalm, spelling is not consistent and the u-form will be found in at least three texts: Col. 3.10, *renued*, Job 10.17 *renuest*, and Rom. 12.2 *renuing*.<sup>1</sup> Opportunities for picking up the u-spelling would be plentiful, but the Geneva version seems the most probable source if it was in fact a version with which Milton was familiar. All the probabilities suggest that a puritan, the son of a puritan, who received much of his early education from the puritan minister Thomas Young, would have been largely brought up on the puritan version which, prior to 1611, was the people's bible, and even after 1611 was by no means immediately dispossessed; further editions were issued up to 1644—the very year of publication of *Areopagitica*—and it remained the favourite of many distinguished men.<sup>2</sup>

What evidence do Milton's writings afford as to the facts? What one would like to know is which version predominated in his affections, so that its phrases (where the two versions can be distinguished) were the first to leap to his mind. To attempt to answer *that* question, if it can be answered, would involve a long study. I can only say that while Milton the theologian gives preference to the Authorised version, Milton the poet shows evidence of at least equal familiarity with the Geneva version. The first statement is based on an inspection of texts cited in the writings on divorce, only a partial inspection, but sufficient to show that the great majority at least were cited from the A.V. But a preference of this kind is a preference of mere scholarship: many a scholar of the present day might similarly, in his technical work, quote by preference from the R.V. of 1885, though that version had no hold on his affections and had contributed little or nothing to the treasures of his memory. In rendering the psalms into English verse the poet would have as much to say as the scholar, and I accordingly proceeded to examine in detail Milton's versions of Psalms 1 to 8. I went through the Genevan and Authorised versions in Wright's *Hexaplar Psalter*, and halted where the readings differed. If Milton followed either version, that version was noted: if he used his own words no note of course was necessary. A certain latitude of judgment was allowed: e.g. in Ps. 2, line 19, where Milton reads 'utmost' ('bounds'), G.V. 'endes' ('of the

<sup>1</sup> Reprint ed. Aldis Wright, 5 vols., Cambridge, at the University Press, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Bible in its ancient and English versions*, ed. H. Wheeler Robinson, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 182 and p. 223.



earth') and A.V. 'uttermost' ('parts'), Milton was taken as following the A.V. In all, thirty-four comparisons were obtained, in nineteen of which Milton followed the G.V., in fourteen the A.V., and in one instance both versions at once, since in ll. 31, 32 of his Psalm 4 'joy' is taken from G.V. and 'gladness' from A.V. Little stress can be laid on the modest excess in favour of the Geneva version when the basis is so small, but the figures suggest that Milton was at least as familiar with the G.V. as with the A.V.

Most, though not all, modern commentators on Ps. 103.5 seem to prefer the prosaic explanation that the wretched eagle is moulting, and can appeal to the authority of Jerome on Is. 40.31 in support (*Patr. Lat.* xxiv. 426): the view supports the transmitted 'muing' if, but only if, the *O.E.D.* explanation of that word can be accepted. But Milton did not know the views of modern commentators; and those of his own day, whether of the old or the reformed religion, realising perhaps that they were dealing with a poet, gave preference to fable and not necessarily to one single fable; for there are many clustering round the eagle, they can all be allegorically interpreted, and 'one sense of holie Scripture excludeth not an other'. Let me cite, as the fullest, the summary from the Douai bible (1610):

Aristotel and Plinie write, that an Eagle decayeth not, nor euer dieth by old age, but the vpper part of her beake stil growing, at last hindereth her from eating, and so she dieth of famine. Saadias, and other Hebrew Rabbins, reporte that an Eagle euerie tenne yeares washeth herselfe in the sea as in a bath, & then flying very hiegh burneth her fethers in the elemental fire, & new fethers growing she becometh fresh, as in her first youth, til at last about an hundred yeares old, she is not able to rise from the water and so is drowned. S. Augustin more probably affirmeth that in long time her beake growing long, and stopping her mouth, that she can not eat, she breaketh the vpper hooked part therof against a stone, and so receiueh meate, and recouereth strength, as in her youth.<sup>1</sup>

The Authorised version did not condescend to expository notes, but when Milton turned to his Geneva version he would find the marginal commentary: 'As the egle, when her beake ouergroweth, sucketh blood, and so is renued in strength, euen so God miraculously giueth strength to his Church aboue all mans expectation'. This form of the fable was taken up

<sup>1</sup> The above is the first portion of the Annotations to Ps. 102 (103), Douai bible, vol. 2, p. 188. Let me collect here a number of references which I owe to the kindness of Professor Maas. For the statement as to the beak overgrowing in old age: Aristotle, *Hist. Animalium* ix. 32. p. 619. a. 16. (The English reader will find a version by Sir D'Arcy Thompson in *The Works of Aristotle translated into English*, Clarendon Press, 1910, vol. IV): and Pliny N.H. Lib. x. cap. 3 towards the end. For St. Augustine, cited in the Douai bible, *Patr. Lat.* xxxvii. 1323. The legend referred to in the marginal commentary of the Geneva version, he writes, seems to go back at least as far as Eugephius (about the sixth century A.D.) on Terence *Heautontimorumenos* 520:—*Aquila senectus*: aiunt aquilam in senectute quod ei rostri pars exterior vetustate et incremento curvata foramen includat, ad cadavera accedere et sic sanguinem in potum sumere et quodammodo bibendo vivere. Jerome brings the Terence citation into relation with the Psalter passage; *Patr. Lat.* xxv. 1220 (original issue; 1164 in reprint of 1884). I am also indebted to Professor Maas for referring me to the *Physiologus*: I used the old edition cited in the text, but he informs me that there is a modern edition ed. F. Sbordone, 1936.

into the Sternhold and Hopkins version of the Psalms, which Milton surely must have known—

That fild with goodnesse thy desire,  
and did prolong thy youth :  
Like as the Eagle casts her bill,  
whereby her age renew'th.

It is a different form of legend from either of those cited by the Douai bible, but no one of them does anything to suggest a relation of the rejuvenescence to moulting. The *Physiologus*, Cap. vi, gives yet another version: I cite from *Epiphaniū Constantiæ Opera*, Coloniae, 1682, which has the Latin text in one column and the Bishop's commentary in Greek facing it in the other:—

Aquila volucrum regina, à longissima vita denominationem accipit, vivit enim annos centum. Cum vero senescit, rostrum ei incurvatur, caligantque oculi, ita ut nec videre possit, nec cibum capere. Igitur in altum sese attollit, & in praeceptam se projicit rupem, ad quam rostrum allidit, et se frigidis immergit aquis, adversusque solares radios se opponit, tuncque ex oculis cadunt lippidines, ac iterum juvenescit.

There is surely something reminiscent in those last lines? 'She faces the rays of the sun, and then the scales fall from her eyes'—'kindling her undazl'd eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain it self of heavenly radiance'—Milton's mind had simply slipped on from the biblical text itself to that of the early commentators, and was wandering with them in the garden of fable!

In sum, if we read:

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: Methinks I see her as an Eagle renewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazl'd eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain it self of heav'nly radiance;

the passage presents a complete continuity, not of logic but of association of ideas. The nation rousing herself suggests the strong man of Psalm 78; the strong man suggests Samson and his 'invincible locks'; and the rousing himself from the weakness of sleep the renewal of youth of the eagle in Psalm 103, from which the writer's mind naturally moves on to the fables of the expositors. If we retain the reading 'muing' the passage not only fails to make sense, but there is a complete break in the association of ideas.

It only remains to express my thanks to all those who have aided me with suggestions and references, and more especially to Professor Maas, to whose learning and kindness I stand in equal debt.

G. UDNY YULE.

A NOTE ON DONNE'S *EXTASIE*

No one would gainsay the usual description of Donne's *Extasie* as one of his greatest metaphysical love-poems. Yet I doubt if that description points us to the things the poem most concerns. It does nothing to explain Donne's insistence on self-knowledge; and his interest in the 'that subtle knot, which makes us man'. Further (and this is heretical) the actual love-trance is pretty coolly described; it is rather an academic affair. Donne's emotions are more deeply engaged elsewhere. His real interest is in the basic constitution of man and man's place in the order of creation.

To an age versed in religious technique there was nothing strange in the mystical state of *ecstasis*. It is a single item in Browne's resounding list at the end of *Urn Burial* of

Christian Annihilation, *Ecstasis*, Exsolution, Liquefaction, Transformation, the kiss of the Spouse, Gustation of God, and Ingression into the Divine shadow.

Marvell in the *Garden* assumes that the reader is perfectly familiar with the idea when he makes his soul leave his body and perch on a tree like a bird. And here is a prose description of the state written in the early seventeenth century, and like Donne's poem faithfully recording its traditional characteristics:<sup>1</sup>

Though the present condition of man bee earthly, made of the earth, feeds on the earth, and is dissolved to the earth, and therefore the soule doth lesse discover her selfe by her proper actions, then doth the materiall body; yet it is not unknowne to Philosophie, that there is an extasis of the soule, wherein she is carried in a trance, wholly and only intending the intellectuall functions, while the body lies dead like a carcasce without breath, sense, motion, or nourishment, onely as a pledge to assure us of the soules returne.

Reading the *Extasie* we are in fact in a world not of violent innovation, but of tradition; and the total poem exploits something much more central to traditional lore than the specialised state of a mystical experience.

When the ages of Spenser and Donne considered man they associated him with his cosmic setting in a way quite strange to a modern. He was still part of the great order which the Middle Ages had succeeded in imposing on the universe. That order was pictured in three main forms: a chain of being, a set of corresponding and multifariously connected planes, and a dance. In the chain of being man occupied a key-position between the beasts and the angels, uniting in himself three souls, vegetative, sensitive, and rational, and by the freedom of his will having the power to incline in one or other direction. As one of the planes of creation he was a little world corresponding in much detail with the heavenly orders, the universe or macrocosm, and the state or body politic. In the order of his social and political setting he took part in the great dance of the cosmos.

As the microcosm man shared mere existence with minerals, the power of

<sup>1</sup> From Christopher Goodman, *The Fall of Man* (1616) p. 42.

growth with vegetables, and the power of feeling with animals. His peculiar attribute was the reason, peculiar in the way he could use it, but shared by the angels and the quality through which he was the image of God. Human reason was divided into the two great faculties of the understanding or 'wit' and the will. Man fulfilled his proper function as man by exercising these faculties properly. In this exercise he was separated from beasts and angels alike. Bestial understanding was limited though it did exist, as Donne himself said in the *Nocturnall upon S. Lucies Day*.

I should preferre,  
If I were any beast,  
Some ends, some means.

Angelic understanding was perfected, for every angel possessed all the knowledge his faculties were capable of holding. As for the will, the beasts were entirely ruled by the stars, while the angelic will, though free, was simply equated with the will of God. Only in man were understanding and will variable.

With such possibilities of change in understanding and will it followed that education or 'nurture' was of the highest moment. It was the special function of man to learn. What should he learn to know? God of course. But best indirectly. God can be easiest understood *per seculum creaturarum*. But even that great means had not quite the standing of the other, the knowledge of self. Of all human functions self-knowledge was the most typical and the most important: impossible for the beasts, unnecessary for the angels, but for man the supreme moral function. When Regan says to Goneril that their father has known himself but slenderly she is calling him a child, uneducated, one who has hardly begun to do the proper job of a man.

Some of the above utter commonplaces form the main theme of Donne's *Extasie*. The argument is that through the different acts of love the function of man as man is being worthily performed.

First there is the position of man between beast and angel. The lovers aspire to the purely intellectual and disembodied state of the angels, and their souls leave their bodies in a dumb and motionless trance. (There is nothing romantic about the lovers' dumbness in this poem.) But at the end of the poem they recognise their human limitations and the need of the body and of the senses (which they shared with the beasts). If the blood, the main vital agent of the body, strives upwards through the three kinds of spirits it engenders (natural vital and animal) to the meeting place of body and soul, 'that subtile knot, which makes us man', so must the intellectual principle, the soul, be ready to co-operate and on its side to climb down the ladder of being to the region of the senses. Otherwise, great Prince though the soul be, it will yet lack scope and be a prisoner.

Nevertheless the ecstasy though temporary has done its work: it has 'unperplexed' or untied 'that subtile knot' and in so doing has made the strands clearer to the view. More precisely it has been an exercise in education; it has advanced the great human function of self-knowledge.

This Extasie doth unperplex  
(We said) and tell us what we love,  
Wee see by this, it was not sexe,  
We see, we saw not what did move.

Through the ecstasy the lovers now realise that they had lacked self-knowledge before: now they know that sex was not the motive. Later on the lovers' souls claim to have reached a degree of self-knowledge beyond any possible reach in an ordinary single soul. In the ordinary state a soul is 'perplexed', so tied up with the fickle body that utter self-knowledge is out of the question; but this union of two ecstatic souls into an oversoul *does* know itself. It is composed of changeless things, which can be steadily apprehended and studied.

Wee then, who are this new soule, know,  
Of what we are compos'd, and made,  
For, th'Atomies of which we grow,  
Are soules, whom no change can invade.

This is the main theme: man's place and function in creation's scale. But though the cosmic dance is omitted (unless one likes to include the cosmic music in the reference to spheres and Intelligences), the corresponding planes are hinted at. The 'pregnant bank' at the opening refers forward to physical love at the end and suggests the duplication of erotic function in microcosm and nature. The string that unites the lovers' eyes is double in that it runs from one pair to another pair of eyes, but it is 'one'. And it would be (roughly) circular. As such it would correspond to the natural motion of heavenly things, which was not as with the elements up and down but an eternal round: the motion of the soul itself.<sup>1</sup> The angels or Intelligences guiding the heavenly spheres correspond to the soul guiding the body; macrocosm and microcosm again. As the prince is in the state so is the soul in the body and the mental functions of man: body politic and microcosm.

To maintain that the *Extasie* deals with the nature of man rather than with a specialised and extraordinary love experience is not to cry down the poem. It is rather to enlarge its content and to relate it to a great tragic theme, to Shakespeare when he makes Hamlet compare man to beast and angel, and Lear retort to his daughters

Allow not nature more than nature needs,  
Man's life is cheap as beast's.

<sup>1</sup> This interpretation of the string is of course conjectural; I don't want to press it.

Of course the *Extasie* is in some sort a love poem, but I cannot take it either as the expression of hectic passion or as a cynical attempt at seduction. It shows us Donne at his sanest and comparatively detached from his object. It has the cool strong rhythms of *A Valediction Forbidding Mourning* rather than the hectic rhythms of the other *Valediction of Weeping*. And as for sanity, it allows a healthy scope for the body in subordination to the mind which is quite opposed to Donne's terrible outbursts in the *Second Anniversary*:

Thinke that no stubborne sullen Anchorit,  
Which fixt to a pillar, or a grave, doth sit  
Bedded, and bath'd in all his ordures, dwels  
So fowly as our Soules in their first-built Cels.

The *Extasie* shows us love as a part of the great human business of living as human beings should.

E. M. W. TILLYARD.

#### AN ANONYMOUS POEM OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The following poem was found by Mr. Arthur Rogers, bookseller, of Newcastle, in Rowe's 1709 edition of Shakespeare, and given by him to the Bodleian Library. It is written in a hand of the first quarter of the eighteenth century. As the punctuation is erratic and occasionally misleading I have normalized it.

##### THE ACTOR'S EPITOME

He, who wou'd Act, must think: for thought will find  
The art to form y<sup>e</sup> Body by the Mind.  
Weigh, for Example, these few Maxims right  
And Steer yo<sup>r</sup> Course by the befriending Light.  
On the raisd Neck oft mov'd but ever Strait  
Turn yo<sup>r</sup> unbending head with Easy State,  
Shun rambling Looks: Fix yo<sup>r</sup> attention high,  
Pointedly earnest, meeting Eye with Eye.  
Spread be yo<sup>r</sup> opening breast, oft chang'd yo<sup>r</sup> face.  
Step with a Slow Severity of Grace,  
Pausingly warm, Significantly rise,  
And affectations empty Swell despize.  
Be what you Seem, Each pictur'd passion weigh,  
Fill first yo<sup>r</sup> Thoughts w<sup>th</sup> All yo<sup>r</sup> words must say.  
Strong yet distinguished let Expression paint  
Not Straining Mad, nor negligently faint.  
On rising Spirit let your Voice take wing  
And Nerves elastick into passion Spring.  
Let ev'ry Joint keep time, Each Sinew bend,  
And the Shot Soul in ev'ry Start ascend.

Any information or suggestions as to the authorship of this poem would be welcome.

BERYL SMALLEY.



NOTE ON *THE PRELUDE* VI, 160-74 (1805), 142-54 (1850)

And as I have read of one by shipwreck thrown  
 With fellow sufferers whom the waves had spared  
 Upon a region uninhabited  
 An island of the Deep, who having brought  
 To land a single Volume and no more,  
 A treatise of Geometry, was used,  
 Although of food and clothing destitute,  
 And beyond common wretchedness depress'd,  
 To part from company and take this book,  
 Then first a self-taught pupil in those truths,  
 To spots remote and corners of the Isle  
 By the sea side, and draw his diagrams  
 With a long stick upon the sand, and thus  
 Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost  
 Forget his feeling; (1805 text)

Some years after my edition of *The Prelude* appeared, I found, on the second page of a notebook used by Dorothy Wordsworth in 1798-9 for transcribing her brother's poems, the following entry:

From a narrative of various events of the Life of Revd Mr. Nelson: One thing though strange is most true. Though destitute of food and clothing, and depressed to a degree beyond common wretchedness, I could sometimes collect my mind to mathematical studies. I had bought Barrow's Euclid at Plymouth; it was the only volume I brought on shore; it was always with me and I used to take it to remote corners of the island by the seaside, and draw my diagrams with a long stick upon the sand. Thus I often beguiled my sorrow and almost forgot my feeling, and thus without any other assistance I made myself, in a good measure, Master of the first six books of Euclid.

All search for a book of travel by or about Nelson proved fruitless; but a short time ago the Rev. Dr. Cairns wrote to tell me that on lecturing recently on the Rev. John Newton, the friend of Cowper, he quoted this passage, and that a member of his audience, Dr. J. W. Oliver, at once identified it as the source of Wordsworth's lines. Since then Professor Havens, in his exhaustive study of *The Prelude*, *The Mind of a Poet*, has independently traced the source to Newton, conjecturing, with great astuteness, that Wordsworth owed the passage to one of his sister's diaries. Two slight mistakes, he adds, suggest this: Newton had no 'fellow sufferers' and he was not shipwrecked, though he says 'I landed upon the island with little more than the clothes upon my back, as if I had escaped shipwreck'.

Professor Havens further suggests that Wordsworth did not realise that the passage was a verbatim copy of Newton and not a summary: had he done so, he would hardly have taken some seven and a half lines of *The Prelude* almost word for word consciously and without acknowledgment. With this I do not agree. For in the first place the style of the passage, as given in

the notebook, is clearly that of a verbatim copy and not of a summary made by Dorothy, and, in the second, Wordsworth's use of the actual language of a book of travel can be paralleled by his account of Dampier in MS. W. of *The Prelude* (v. my edition, pp. 604-5). It seems more probable that Wordsworth read the book himself in 1798, and, struck by the passage, dictated it to his sister—if she had read it herself, and copied from the book, she would not be likely to have written 'Nelson' for 'Newton'. The interval of time which elapsed between his reading the book and writing the passage in *The Prelude* (1804) would account for the inaccuracy of detail to which Professor Havens calls attention. The full title of Newton's book is *An Authentic narrative of Some Remarkable and Interesting Particulars in the life of — communicated in a Series of Letters to the Rev. T. Haweis*, (1764).

E. DE SELINCOURT.

## REVIEWS

**The Rhythm of 'Beowulf'. An Interpretation of the Normal and Hyper-metric Verse Forms in Old English Poetry.** By JOHN COLLINS POPE. New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1942. Pp. x+386. 30s. net.

We have what seems to be one line of early Germanic poetry which I may be permitted to print in the form *ek Hlewagastiz holtingaz horna tawido*. If we transcribe it into the Anglo-Saxon we know, it would read something like 'ic Hleogest hylting' (or 'helting') horn tede'. I call attention to it because the first three words make a possible half-line, but the last two do not. The traditional verse-form of Germanic could not survive unaltered the linguistic developments of the intervening centuries. Early Germanic verse was recited and in some way accompanied by the harp, but what we have in Anglo-Saxon is book-poetry. Does anyone believe that *Elene*, *Andreas* or *Genesis* were recited to the harp, and is it certain that even *Beowulf* was so recited? The most we can say of Anglo-Saxon verse is that the scheme was developed by oral delivery and taken over complete. If so it was a scheme developed before the Anglo-Saxon syncope and apocope and all it involves, and enormously, or rather vitally, affected by that development. Consider the case of the so-called svarabhaktic vowels. That they were there is certain, cf. 'sawol secan'; that they were admitted in other cases where the 'normal' verse-form did not need them is equally plain if we compare, e.g., 'atertanum fah', where the vowel is not radical, with 'irenendum fæst', 'oncerbendum fæst', 'morgenlongne dæg', 'ealne utanwearnde', where it is, and beside the first of these the simpler form 'irenendum'. It seems to me that verses like 'irenendum fæst' can only be the result of the presence and admission of inorganic vowels, and the extension of the licence to the parallel case of lightly stressed radical vowels. If an early date for *Beowulf* be admitted, and it seems to me on linguistic grounds alone as nearly certain as such things can be, then it follows that we have caught Anglo-Saxon poetry just at the point when it was adjusting itself to new linguistic conditions—syncope and apocope, svarabhakti, consonantal loss ('h'), and consequential lengthening and contraction. It is not surprising that there is some uncertainty and irregularity, and that the irregularities of the early attempts hardened into a tradition in the later poets.

Professor J. C. Pope, whose elaborate study of the rhythm of *Beowulf* it is the purpose of this notice to commend to the attention of scholars, perhaps would agree with some of the preceding remarks. He says (p. 12): 'In the case of the obsolete Germanic verse, however, tradition has disappeared, and rhythmic sense alone cannot solve the problem'. He means Anglo-Saxon tradition and an undisciplined sense of rhythm, but the significant words are nevertheless our dependence on rhythmic sense for a solution. On these lines he sets himself in this study to expound a new theory of the rhythm of alliterative verse as employed in *Beowulf*. His aim is to establish a single basic pattern for all verses. In the half-line we have two measures of quadruple time ( $\frac{4}{4}$ ). Each measure begins with a stressed syllable, and anything preceding is anacrusis, but (and this is the most original part of his theory) weightier endings like Sievers's types B and C, where

in fact two stresses occur in the same measure, have in practice always an initial rest in lieu of a stress in the preceding measure, and are closely associated in their ending with Sievers's two D types. He employs a musical notation, but representing the rest by 'p', it may conveniently be shown as follows: a line like 'him on bearme læg' is divided 'p x x | - x -', to *gesceaphwile* p x x | -- x, *hu ða æpelingas* p x x | u x - x'. Rests are introduced freely elsewhere as well. The hypermetric verses (Sievers's 'schwellvers') are brought into line by the assumption of twin verses—or verses tending thereto—in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, with a preceding portion equal in time to the normal half-line which forms the close, e.g. 'swætan on þa swiðran healf' is divided: '- x x x || - x - x' with a duration on the first syllable of 'swætan' double that on 'swiðran'. Complete details must be obtained from Dr. Pope's book.

It will be observed that the author asserts a time-equivalence in all normal half-lines and in the two measures of which they are composed. To that view there will be general assent provided it is not pressed too far. All readers of *Beowulf* have probably, consciously or not, introduced appropriate pauses. That the verses are or need be exactly equivalent is less certain. I have listened to portions of *Beowulf* rendered on a gramophone by a distinguished English scholar, and unless I am mistaken his reading did not give equal time to the different half-lines while producing no disagreeable effect. If we turn to modern English poetry the theory of equality is no less hard to maintain. In Cowper's poem on *The Royal George* the first line, 'Toll for the brave', is not to be equated with 'Full charged with England's thunder', and there are many small variations besides.

More vital to the new theory is the rejection of a fixed quantity on long syllables or a fixed quantitative relation between long and not long. Dr. Pope tells us that no syllable has a definite quantity, but we have ranges of quantity, and long stressed syllables have a normal value of a quarter note but may be compressed to an eighth and extended to a half, and we are told further that this range of quantity corresponds almost exactly with that postulated by William Thomson for speech in general. W. Thomson, who wrote a portly volume, *The Rhythm of Speech*, to which Dr. Pope not seldom refers, proceeds more boldly when he states that vowel quantity 'is a thing we now know does not exist'. This writer is unable to conceive a language with an inherent distinction between long and short syllables. He makes sport of one scholar who affirmed that modern speech had lost all sense of syllabic quantity by the triumphant answer that English was familiar with half-a-dozen different quantities, as if (to use the kind of argument which might appeal to him) to the statement that some people had no sense of the value of an inch, it is a sufficient and convincing reply that on the contrary they knew four different values for it. Mr. Thomson's criticism on all who differ, including ancient authorities, is ignorance, incapacity or perversity. These remarks are not really irrelevant, as will appear.

It is beyond question that Sievers's arrangement of stresses is a fact, but it is also true and significant that his conclusions are in line with the observed facts of language; e.g. vowels in open syllables which can and must be reckoned in the metrical scheme, are such as have a logical explanation, words like 'sceaweras', weak verbs of class II such as 'egsian', 'egsode', 'egsodon', the isolated 'betimberde' (a far more probable reading than 'betimbrede'), reduction of heavy syllables not under secondary stress as 'ælc' from 'ælic', with analogical variation where both forms are possible in the same word, as in 'Hroðgar', but 'Hroðgares' the occurrence of 'sorgende' for 'sorgiende' because of the shift of stress to

'-end-', the equivalence of treatment in apocope of '-x' and 'u x x', and other points. The strict limitation on the introduction of short syllables unsupported by another unstressed is also a fact; 'on heahstede' is permissible, so are 'penden þær wunað', 'þreanyd þolað', but not 'penden wunað' nor 'nyda þolað'. There must have been some governing principle in speech to account for the admissibility or exclusion of particular linguistic forms. This at once raises the question of quantity in Anglo-Saxon.

A well-known and instructive illustration may be had from the history of later Latin development. In Vulgar Latin the classical quantities disappear. We have instead strong stress developed on the syllable which carried the Latin *accentus*, the vowels there being somewhat lengthened or susceptible of extension, others not. This leads to medieval verse of the type 'tuba mirum spargens sonum', or (to come nearer to our subject) Latin verses in alliterative metre such as occur at the close of *The Phoenix*, 'merueri, sine fine, almae letitiae' (i.e., 'letitsye'), the last also meant as an A line. Whether by influence of tradition or otherwise the author permits himself no corresponding departure from original quantity in his Anglo-Saxon verses. In Vulgar Latin we have an exaggeration of the classical distinction in quality between long and short vowels, so that a qualitative distinction supplants the quantitative. The distribution is no longer governed by original quantity, and the vowel development depends on stress and quality with no reference to classical quantity, in such manner that Latin 'e' long and 'i' short are treated exactly alike in French. That is the sort of thing we have in Modern English; our so-called long vowels are extensible vowels having Mr. Thomson's half-a-dozen values according to circumstances. In his book he scoffs at some Englishman who declared that the Scotch 'leemit' for 'limit' has a long first syllable. Of course he was right. The syllable is short—though not so short as in limit—but the point is that the Englishman identified his vowels by their quality. His long vowel has the quality of the Scotch vowel and can be just as short as it. Long vowels have no independent inherent quantity distinguishing them from the corresponding short, wheresoever and howsoever they occur. It is on that principle that Dr. Pope rhythmicizes *Beowulf*. 'No syllable has a definite quantity until it is placed in a rhythmic series. . . . It is impossible to speak of the quantity of a syllable that is removed from its context. . . . As soon . . . as we . . . fix the quantity of each syllable according to its position as well as its *vague grammatical potentialities* (my italics) we can record a rhythm.' That is a very considerable assumption and demands examination.

Stress had undoubtedly a predominating place in Anglo-Saxon, and very likely increasingly so during the course of its history. At the same time quantitative distinctions were inherited and maintained. The question is how long. Except in isolated cases there is no evidence for a distinction in quality between etymologically short and long vowels. Short vowels which are lengthened coalesce with the existing long vowels and have the same history, and that is so whatever the source of the vowel or the date of the lengthening; and correspondingly, long vowels which are shortened fall in with the existing shorts. In Anglo-Saxon stressed syllables there is no confusion between 'e' and 'i' or 'u' and 'o' as we should expect if there was a notably wide pronunciation of short 'i' and 'u'. This we do find in unstressed syllables where the vowels were widened and lowered; still later it appears in forms where they were normally retained, the beginning of the shift of all unstressed vowels to a central position carried out completely at the close of the Anglo-Saxon period. Changes in vowels occur but they are complete;





on 'sælum', 'drihten', 'Geatas', not to speak of verses like 'swa sceal man don' (Σ ♪♪|♪♪), as to the distortion of grammatical forms referred to above. Something may be allowed for the more deliberate utterance of unstressed syllables, especially final syllables, in poetic diction, but it seems to me that the grammarian is entitled to ask for some proof of or evidence for the underlying assumptions of Dr. Pope's theory, which are in apparent contradiction with a good deal of what we think we know.

I will not deal in detail with the new view of the lengthened lines to which the author has devoted a special section. The difficulties of Sievers's three accent scheme are obvious enough, but the attempt to press these lines into a scheme of double the normal verse seems to me needless. The line between the lengthened verse ('schwellvers') and extended ('erweiterte') verses is fluctuating really. The main point of difference would seem to be that the lengthened form is admitted in the second half-line. A lengthened verse is a normal verse with an extension in front, where a lengthy prelude acquires sufficient stress to make it in a manner independent, whence alliteration in the first half-line, but normally not in the second half. There the retention of the alliteration in its old place supports the view that the extension is essentially of the nature of an anacrusis. If the additional stress lies on a verb, the presence or absence of alliteration may determine our judgment, as in 'seah on enta geweorc' compared with 'healdað haligra feorh'. *Beowulf* l. 1164 is lengthened, but if the poet had written 'wæron suhter-gefeðeran' instead of 'sæton' I think we should have accepted it as a normal half-line. Is there any compelling reason why 'oferswam ða sioleða bigong' should not be an ordinary B line (with accidental alliteration) of similar construction to 'se was betera þonne ic', and but for the apparent presence of alliteration could we not take 'geweotan ða ða witigan þry' in the same way? When we have a nominal form the position is different, but may well be an extension; even in *Beowulf* we find (both in the second half-line) 'ealle hi deað fornam' beside 'eal þu hit mid gepyldum healdest'. It is significant enough that eighty-five per cent of such verses have A ending and that a stressed final is extremely rare. In other words, I doubt the derivation of these verses from any primitive form. The passage from normal to hypermetric does not seem to me disturbing. We are not rhythmically disturbed when Dryden or Pope in a series of so-called five-accent couplets introduces one or more of six, nor yet if the couplet becomes a triplet. Naturally the extension takes more time, all the more from the character of the passages in which lengthened verses usually occur.

RITCHIE GIRVAN.

**The Art of Courtly Love.** By ANDREAS CAPELLANUS. With introduction, translation, and notes by John Jay Parry. (No. XXXIII of the Records of Civilization Sources and Studies.) New York: Columbia University Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1941. Pp. xii+218. 18s. 6d. net.

Mr. Parry quotes from M. Bossuat the opinion that the *De Arte Honeste Amandi* is 'one of those capital works which reflect the thought of a great epoch, which explain the secret of a civilization'. This, I submit, is to put its claims too high. Courtly Love itself does not suffice to explain the secret of medieval civilization and the treatise of Andreas does not, in all senses, 'explain' Courtly Love. The formal, and perhaps whimsical, systematization of his book makes it an extremely useful text for the modern scholar who wishes to illustrate the sentiment in its most distinctive and paradoxical form; but when we want to understand this.

sentiment from within, to think ourselves back into the attitude of the medieval lover, we may find better guidance from the poets, and not always from those poets who carry the feeling to its furthest extremity. An English version of Andreas is, none the less, a very desirable thing, and especially for the audience Mr. Parry has in view. The existence of this audience marks a stage worth noting in the history of culture. There is now, apparently, a public sufficiently advanced in medieval studies to wish to read Latin 'source-books' about Courtly Love, and at the same time so innocent of Latin that when Mr. Parry (p. 4) mentions Ovid he finds it advisable to slip in tactfully the information that Ovid was a poet and 'lived in Rome in the time of the Emperor Augustus'. What, after all, could be more medieval than this?

Mr. Parry's Introduction brings readably together a good deal of information about the circumstances in which medieval love poetry arose and the suggestions offered by scholars as to its origin. He himself is a moderate upholder of the Arabian theory which he supports by liberal quotation from Arabic sources, especially from the *Dove's Neck-Ring* of Ibn Hazm. The evidential value of these quotations varies. I do not myself think that Ibn Hazm's references to sighs and tears, pallor, jealousy, secrecy, and loss of appetite are very conclusive. On the other hand the Arabic convention whereby 'for decency's sake' the mistress is given masculine pronouns and adjectives, and the fact that she can be addressed as 'lord' and 'master' (*sayyidi* and *mawlaya*) are a very striking parallel to the Provençal use of *midons* and *senhor*. But the most difficult bit of evidence to interpret is the Platonic element in Ibn Hazm. He seems to know the Myth of the *Symposium* and represents lovers as divided parts of a single pre-natal soul striving to recover its lost unity; and he says that the soul, being herself beautiful, desires Beauty, and therefore 'inclines to perfect images'. Now this idea, unless I am mistaken, is not found in the poetry of Courtly Love. On the other hand, when Plato's erotic mysticism became known to Western Europe a few centuries later, the courtly tradition immediately embraced it, as we see in Ficino, Castiglione, and Spenser. Courtly Love and Platonism are, then, things eminently congenial to each other. One might say indeed that they had long been waiting for each other: that Platonism which found in Athens no better soil than Greek pederasty had to wait for the Renaissance to find its true embodiment, and that Courtly Love, which in the Middle Ages had to make shift with the mock theology of Cupid had to wait for the same period to find its true metaphysic. It therefore becomes a nice question whether the Platonic element in the Moslem poets supports the theory that the Troubadours are indebted to them, or whether it is, in fact, the strongest argument against that theory. For it might well be argued, 'This thing, as later history proves, is so congenial to Courtly Love, that if the Provençals had encountered it they must have reproduced it. If they did not, the most natural explanation is that they knew nothing of Arabic literature'. I leave the question to those now working on a subject with which I have somewhat lost touch.

One point which Mr. Parry does not make quite clear is the extent to which such sentiment as Ibn Hazm expresses was a novelty in Arabic literature. Ibn Hazm himself, however, is quoted as saying that the ways of 'the Bedouins and the ancients' in love were 'different from ours' (p. 9). If this means that the Moslem love poetry of his own age is as great an innovation in the Moslem tradition as that of the Troubadours is in the Christian, then the question of Spanish or Provençal precedence sinks into secondary importance compared with the

massive originality—and mystery—of the sentiment that arose about this time at the Western end of the Mediterranean. When a phenomenon AB is new as a whole, we must be careful not to whittle this fact away or to imagine that we have 'explained' it by tracing the relations of A to B and of B to A.

In his Preface Mr. Parry says that he has tried to keep his translation close to the original even at the cost of 'somewhat awkward English'. 'Awkward' is much too harsh a word for the lucid version he has actually made. There is, indeed, a sort of unleavened taste about nearly all translations from Latin prose, and Mr. Parry has not avoided it. (The verb *seem* is one of the traps. It is seldom a good rendering of *videri* on stylistic grounds, and not always on lexical grounds either.) He has certainly not succeeded in reproducing the 'colloquial' character which he attributes (p. vii) to the original: but I am not quite clear wherein the colloquialism of Andreas' Latin consists.

This is a useful book and ought to be in College libraries.

C. S. LEWIS.

**The Character of Hamlet and Other Essays.** By JOHN ERSKINE HANKINS. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; London: H. Milford. 1941. Pp. xii+264. \$3.00; 18s. 6d. net.

Mr. Hankins's book consists of a main essay, on the character of Hamlet, and seven supplementary essays on various subjects relevant to the study of *Hamlet*—'Politics in *Hamlet*', 'Misanthropy in Shakespeare', 'On Ghosts', 'Religion in *Hamlet*: The Bible', 'Religion in *Hamlet*: Repentance', 'Suicide in Shakespeare', and 'Notes on the Structure of *Hamlet*'. The main essay is in part based on material developed at length in the supplementary essays, which embody the results of much sound original research: thus the book is not a collection of miscellaneous papers, but has a single purpose.

It is agreed that a study of the beliefs of his time explains much in Shakespeare that would otherwise remain obscure, and modern *Hamlet* criticism has been enabled to correct old-established errors by reference to that study. Thus, for example, few nowadays doubt that the reason given by Hamlet for not killing Claudius in the prayer-scene is historically a valid reason and not that of an irresolute weakling searching about for an excuse for inaction. The study of the ideals, conceptions, beliefs, and standards of conduct of Shakespeare's age is essential to a true interpretation of the drama as a whole, and Mr. Hankins's supplementary essays are full of really interesting material in this kind, especially his essay on Elizabethan and Jacobean beliefs concerning ghosts.

Mr. Hankins believes that the key which opens the mystery of Hamlet's character is the detection in him of a conflict between two principles motivating conduct—'honour' (in a special sense) and justice. Laertes is motivated by the simple desire to preserve his honour. When called upon to exact vengeance, such a man considers 'the causes and possible consequences of action . . . less important than action itself, which must be such as to enhance one's reputation in the eyes of the world. Honour in this sense is an egotistic code, careless of injury to others if one succeeds in exalting oneself. . . . By contrast, justice emphasizes the well-being of others and seeks above all things to avoid the infliction of unmerited injury'. Mr. Hankins illustrates these two principles motivating conduct in other plays, and leaves one in no doubt that a conflict between them would be clearly understood by Shakespeare's audiences.

Hamlet's first response on being told that his father had been murdered is that of a man whose conduct is regulated by this conception of 'honour':

Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift  
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

This is the spirit of Laertes, and Hamlet evinces it at intervals throughout the play. But on the other hand Hamlet is above all anxious to perpetrate no injustice. He is perfectly sincere in saying that 'The spirit that I have seen / May be a devil', and Mr. Hankins shows that this is quite in accordance with Elizabethan belief. It is no mere excuse for inaction. Hamlet, as a man of justice, must make quite sure that vengeance against Claudius is in fact called for. For this reason he must have proof positive. But at certain points the concept of 'honour' returns to his mind (as for instance when he sees before him the example of young Fortinbras) and, speaking as a man motivated by this concept, he reproaches himself for a delay which seems weak and reprehensible in a man of 'honour'. Hamlet has two points of view, according to one of which immediate action without reflection is demanded of him, and according to the other of which reflection must be exercised before action is taken, in order to ensure that the action shall be just. Now the one point of view predominates in him, now the other: sometimes, as in the Hecuba soliloquy, they occur very close together, and sometimes the conflict bewilders Hamlet himself.

This, then, is Mr. Hankins's main thesis: Hamlet does *not* delay unduly for a man motivated by the concept of justice. He reproaches himself for delay at certain points—but that is because at these points he is preoccupied with the conception of honour in this special sense. That is by no means all that Mr. Hankins has to say on the character of Hamlet, but it is his principal contention.

There are one or two points upon which one must register disagreement with Mr. Hankins. He apparently believes that it was Shakespeare who introduced the Hecate scenes into *Macbeth*. He attempts, in my view unsuccessfully, to demonstrate that the 'how like an angel' speech is a paraphrase of the eighth psalm. He is too prone to draw conclusions as to a Shakespearian revision of *Hamlet* from differences between the first quarto and the two later texts: one cannot claim that passages absent from Q1 were necessarily added by Shakespeare in a revision—it is more than likely that they were omitted by the Q1 reporter. These are small points, however. More important is the doubt one may feel as to whether Mr. Hankins does not over-simplify in his analysis of Hamlet's character, seeing it as a rational rather than an imaginative problem. One may doubt whether he has plucked out the heart of the mystery. But at the same time one must record great admiration of the lucidity of his writing and the clarity of his argument; and it must be emphasized that the book is of great value to students of the ideological background of Shakespeare and his age.

G. I. DUTHIE.

**Studies in Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger.** By BALDWIN MAXWELL. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1939. Pp. x+238. \$3.00; 14s. net.

In this volume Professor Baldwin Maxwell has collected seventeen studies bearing on the three dramatists named in the title. Nine have already appeared, mostly in periodicals, and are reprinted in their original or revised form. With one

exception these dealt with individual plays. So do some of the eight new studies, but the more important of them are concerned with wider aspects of the dramatists' work. Among these the most novel and elaborate is the article on 'The Attitude towards the Duello in the Beaumont and Fletcher Plays'. Its principal aim is to show that from about 1616 there is a marked change in these plays in the treatment of the causes and effects of duelling. The practice, influenced strongly by French example, had gained a strong hold on courtiers and gallants in the early years of James I's reign.<sup>1</sup> It came to a head in 1613 in a number of notorious encounters. The King, on 15 October of that year and on the following 4 February, and again later in 1614 issued proclamations designed to stem the abuse of private challenges and combats. But it continued, and Bacon in a letter to Villiers in 1616 reports (with perhaps some extra polish) what James had said to him on the subject.

I was bold also to declare how excellently his Majesty had expressed to me a contemplation of his touching duels; that is, that when he came forth and saw himself princely attended with goodly noblesse and gentlemen; he entered into the thought, that none of their lives were in certainty, not for twenty-four hours, from the duel; for it was but a heat or a mistaking, and then a lie, and then a challenge, and then a life.

Dr. Maxwell argues that the royal hostility to duelling had a powerful effect upon the attitude towards the practice in the Beaumont and Fletcher plays. He appears to leave out of account the fact that Beaumont died in 1616 and that this might have been a contributory influence. However this may be, he seeks to make out a case for a contrast in this respect between the plays written before that date and later. But the problem is necessarily complicated by many uncertainties of times of composition or of revision.

Thus Dr. Maxwell claims that in the earlier plays there is no evidence of hostility towards duelling as such but only ridicule of the fantastic conventions of the code that governed it or of the trivial pretexts that led to challenges. This is true of the most entertaining of the Bessus scenes in *A King and No King* (1611), and Dr. Maxwell also quotes in support of his view from *Love's Cure*, *The Elder Brother*, *Nice Valour* and *Love's Pilgrimage*. But the dates of these plays are very doubtful, and though Dr. Maxwell in two well-documented essays tries from topical allusions to assign *Nice Valour* and *Love's Pilgrimage* to 1616, such evidence is insufficient to bear the weight of a general theory. He is on safer ground when he points to speeches condemning duelling in some of the later plays which can be dated with comparative certainty: *The Custom of the Country* (1619), *The Little French Lawyer* (1620), *The Pilgrim* (1621) and *Lover's Progress* (1623). The strongest indictment comes from Cleremont in *The Little French Lawyer* (I. i):

The blood of our bold youth that heretofore  
Was spent in honourable action,  
Or to defend or to enlarge the kingdom,  
For the honour of our country and our prince  
Pours itself out with prodigal expense  
Upon our mother's lap, the earth that bred us,  
For every trifle; and these private duels,  
Which had their first original from the French,

<sup>1</sup> F. T. Bowers in *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy* (1940) notes that the idea that vengeance was a private duty lingered longer in Scotland than in England, where it may have gained strength through the accession of a Stuart king.



And for which to this day we are justly censur'd,  
Are banish'd from all civil governments.

• • • • • in all  
The fair dominions of the Spanish King  
They are never heard of.

This speech, as Dr. Maxwell states, recalls one on duelling by King James in the Star Chamber on 13 February 1617, 'wherein he was observed to bestow many good words on the Spanish nation and to gull the French'.

Another of the essays here first published deals with various questions raised by the second Beaumont and Fletcher folio. Dr. Maxwell refutes conclusively the theory that double titles are a proof that plays have been revised. Nor is such proof to be found in the omissions and confusion of the *dramatis personæ* prefixed to forty-six plays in the second folio. Thirty-five of these lists, including those for the thirty-three plays of the first folio, are drawn up in identical form, and appear to have been merely prepared by the publishers as a 'great ease to the Reader'. The lists of actors, on the other hand, prefixed to twenty-five plays must be based on some record at first hand. Dr. Maxwell's view is that the list appended to the 1652 quarto of *The Wild-Goose Chase* suggested similar notations to a possessor of the first folio, and that he was 'the ingenious and worthy Gentleman' who, according to the publishers of the 1679 edition, 'had taken the pains (or rather the pleasure)' to correct the faults of its predecessor, and who being intimate with both authors had been a spectator of most of the plays when they were acted in their lifetime. But in opposition to E. H. C. Oliphant and Professor T. W. Baldwin it is maintained by Dr. Maxwell that the lists do not necessarily give the names of the actors at the first performances, and that therefore they are not safe chronological guides.

The publishers of the second folio claimed that they had received from the same ingenious and worthy Gentleman several prologues and epilogues which were not in the former edition and which were now inserted in their proper places. In an essay on these 'by-ornaments', as Massinger termed them, Dr. Maxwell emphasises the non-fulfilment of this claim. 'Not one prologue or epilogue is in the second folio added to the plays which had been published in the first folio.' Of the fifty-one plays in the 1579 edition only twenty have both prologue and epilogue, four others have prologues, and one an epilogue. Nor is there reason to suppose that the others were for the most part written and lost, for there is evidence that Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger disliked the stereotyped form of these 'petitions', and that some of those printed were written for revivals or even originally for other plays than those which they accompany.

The remaining essay of a general character, 'The Hungry Knaves in the Beaumont and Fletcher Plays', is reprinted in expanded form, and identifies John Shanke as the abnormally thin actor for whom a series of 'lean fool' parts was written.

The other sections of the volume deal with single plays and are for the most part reprinted, with additions, from periodicals, and have thus already been known to scholars. There are new studies, especially in regard to their dating, of *Nice Valour* (mentioned above), *The Scornful Lady*, *The False One* and *A Very Woman*. The two papers on *Henry VIII* are not new, but they have additional significance in relation to Professor Peter Alexander's article in *Essays and Studies* (1931), claiming the play entirely for Shakespeare. Dr. Maxwell takes a similar view but to my mind he succeeds better in disposing of the case for Massinger



than for Fletcher. He lays stress on some points in which the scenes usually ascribed to Fletcher appear not to conform to his technique elsewhere, but, as I hold, these are more than counter-balanced by the general impression made by the versification and the diction. If not Fletcher's, whose are they? They cannot be Shakespeare's in his last period. But whether we agree or not with some of Dr. Maxwell's views, his book is to be welcomed for its balanced and scholarly temper, fortified by an intimate knowledge of the Jacobean historical background.

F. S. BOAS.

**Ignatius his Conclave or His Inthronisation in a Late Election in Hell.**

By JOHN DONNE. Reproduced in facsimile from the edition of 1611 with an introduction by Charles M. Coffin. New York: published for the Facsimile Text Society by Columbia University Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1941. Pp. xxiii+xv (facsimiles)+143. 10s. 6d. net.

*Ignatius his Conclave*, next to the *Devotions* the most popular of Donne's prose works in its own time, has been reprinted once in a modern and easily accessible text by Mr. John Hayward. It cannot therefore be said that Mr. Coffin's facsimile fills a serious gap in our libraries, though it has the advantage of including the original marginal notes omitted in the Nonesuch text. These are useful in giving some indication of Donne's reading at a period of his life about which not enough is known. The quotation from Kepler's *De stella in Cygno* and the reference to Galileo's *Sidereus Nuncius*, published only a year previously, are particularly interesting since they show how exact and up to date Donne's knowledge of the new philosophy was in 1611. In its combination of topical scientific allusion and anti-Jesuit propaganda the book marks a definite stage in its author's intellectual development; this is neither the frivolous inventor of paradoxes nor yet Walton's 'second St. Austin'.

*Ignatius his Conclave* is more than a biographical document, however. It is a powerful piece of controversial writing which ought to be considered upon its own merits. There is nothing particularly subtle about Donne's methods, but they are vigorous and persuasive. His main scheme is a variation of the simplest and most effective of all satirical devices, the mock apologia. By representing Ignatius Loyola as a claimant to the highest place in the infernal hierarchy, that reserved for the 'anti-Christian heroes', against all other pretenders (and it is characteristic of the author's metaphysical wit that these include figures as diverse as Copernicus, Paracelsus and Machiavelli), Donne was able to transform all his protagonist's arguments into a condemnation of the order he founded and the papacy which supported it. Just as Gulliver defends his countrymen, or Thomas Edwards repents of his injustices towards the sects, so is Ignatius condemned out of his own mouth; the indictment piles up with every sentence, excellent opportunities are provided for irony by the actual framework, and the points make themselves. All that remains for the author to do is to find a sufficiently large number of them, and here the familiar themes of king-killing and equivocation, indulgences, the scandalous lives of the popes, are all brought within the range of the argument. Yet the final effect is oddly diffuse. Donne's liveliness of mind, and the baroque style of his time, make it impossible for him to keep his eye permanently on the object; he is distracted, he has to exploit the opportunities for local effect which his plot provides. Consequently the whole, while gaining in variety, lacks the concentration and the edge of Augustan satire.

The details are developed independently; there is no consistency of tone. With the appearance of Paracelsus we are in a world of crude and vigorous comedy:

*Lucifer* said: And who are you? Hee answered, *Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast of Hohenheim*. At this *Lucifer* trembled, as if it were a new *Exorcisme*, & hee thought it might well be the first verse of Saint *John*, which is alwaies employed in *Exorcismes*, and might now bee taken out of the *Welsh* or *Irish Bibles*. But when he understood it was but the webbe of his name, hee recollected himselfe, and raising himselfe upright, asked what he had to say to the great Emperour *Sathan*, *Lucifer*, *Belzebub*, *Leviathan*, *Abaddon*.

When Machiavelli enters, the focus changes again: attention is fixed on his methods of worsting Ignatius, which are characteristically machiavellian. Copernicus's arrival is attended by a number of ironic side-glances at his theory; he will speak to Lucifer only because he believes him to be part of the solar system and afterwards remains 'as quiet as he thinks the sunne'. The significance, in fact, is constantly shifting from the whole to the part.

Surface wit of this kind is so much part of the main satire that it ought not to be ignored; and clearly there is more of it than is possible for the ordinary reader to appreciate. Mr. Coffin has indicated something of the literary background of the pamphlet, and though it was not apparently written in answer to any particular Jesuit apology Donne plainly had the details of the argument in mind: he makes the bones of controversy live, but inevitably those points which have no general application are now lost. It is easy to recreate the sinister pictures of the Jesuits which, aggravated by the Gunpowder Plot and the murder of Henri IV, formed themselves in the contemporary mind; it is less easy to recall the details of the controversy itself, and Donne's contribution to it is so fresh and stimulating that this might prove a useful and rewarding editorial task.

Mr. Coffin's text is printed from a copy of the first edition in English in the Huntington Library. There are a few obscurities caused by MS. corrections or by the bad printing of the original; for these, legible readings have been provided from the British Museum text. A reading for an indecipherable word on p. 37, l. 12 has not been given, and the MS. correction on p. 53 needs some research among the original Errata at the back before it becomes clear. Otherwise this is a good reprint.

ROSEMARY FREEMAN.

**From Donne to Dryden: The Revolt against Metaphysical Poetry.**

By ROBERT LATHROP SHARP. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1940. Pp. vii+221. 18s. 6d. net.

Dr. Sharp's title hardly does justice to all that he has performed in this short study. He has, indeed, traced clearly the revolt against metaphysical poetry, but in the course of doing so he has also produced a lucid and well-documented account of the changes in English poetical taste during the seventeenth century. Those changes, too, he relates to a more fundamental transformation in habits of thought and feeling, to a new way of apprehending experience. What men saw and felt depended, then as now, on what they allowed themselves to see and feel, on what they considered worth while admitting into the field of consciousness, and so into their poetry. In the gradual, and occasionally interrupted, progress from Donne to Dryden, the importance of Hobbes, a 'reformer of intellects' who 'wanted to change habits of thought by changing the meaning of words', is fully realized and clearly stated. The sixth chapter brings down to 1660 the account of

what had been happening to the English poetical mind, and then in a final chapter Dr. Sharp traces the whole process again in little as it is revealed in the work of Dryden, from his earliest poems in the metaphysical manner down to his Preface to the Fables. When Dryden in this last calm and considered statement praises Chaucer for avoiding 'Conceits and Jingles', and says of such 'glittering Trifles' that they are 'so far from being Witty, that in a serious Poem they are nauseous, because they are unnatural', the revolution is complete. (Not that Dryden might not have changed his mind again if he had lived to write another Preface, or if he had been translating some poet quite different from Chaucer.)

In a final summing up Dr. Sharp weighs the gains against the losses to English poetry. With most of what he has to say here one may agree; the old man of Malmesbury had wrought great changes. By subjecting the intellectual atmosphere to a sort of air-conditioning process, Hobbes had not made it impossible to cultivate poetry at all, but he had made it very difficult to cultivate certain kinds of poetry. In his natural desire to keep the main lines of the picture clear, however, Dr. Sharp has perhaps over-emphasized the completeness of the change. By discarding the metaphysical style poetry had lost, he says, 'its hidden layers of reference'. But had it? In the poetry of Pope, at any rate, everything is not on the surface. There are surely echoes and reverberations; the 'thing uttered' has not invariably 'one meaning, clear and unambiguous'. Pope can play subtly on the connotation of words; he can at least penetrate to layers of literary reference when he echoes in a different context a phrase of Homer or Virgil.

If one must make some small reservations of this sort, one can willingly agree that Dr. Sharp's account is in all its important aspects substantially true to the facts. There is not, perhaps, much that is new in this study, but the synthesis is new, and the scattered facts gain greatly from being related to one another with such perception, and so lucidly expounded. As a commentary on seventeenth-century poetry or as an introduction to eighteenth-century poetry this book should prove equally useful; it makes everywhere for a better understanding of both periods.

JAMES R. SUTHERLAND.

**Milton in the Puritan Revolution.** By DON. M. WOLFE. New York, London, Edinburgh, Toronto, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1941. Pp. xvi+496. \$4.00.

Mr. Wolfe describes his book as an attempt to meet the need for 'a comprehensive analysis of Milton's social ideas' in relation to 'both the historical events and the social ideas of his influential contemporaries'. Here is an ambitious, a Gibbonian subject, which the author has further enlarged by an introductory sketch of the social and ideological background from the beginning of the Tudor period. There could be no more difficult and complex subject-matter to reduce and compose into a memorable picture; and it cannot be said that Mr. Wolfe has succeeded in the task. His analysis of his material, under the various chapter headings, is mechanical rather than logical, resulting in much repetition and gyration; he constantly digresses from the main topic of the moment, tempted by affiliations with other topics that have been treated before or are to be treated later. The book is apparently intended for the general American public, since it gives frequent illustrative references to American political conditions and theories that more or less falsify the historical picture. The same motive appears in the tendency to judge thinkers by that presumptuous criterion of whether, and

even how far, they were 'in advance of their times'; we are told, for instance, that 'In the "evolution of democracy" . . . Winstanley's ideas naturally place themselves in the twentieth century and beyond, whereas those of Milton and Lilburne, in the main, fall logically into nineteenth century patterns'. What is perhaps an even more pernicious effect of this unhistorical attitude of mind induced by regard for the 'common reader' is the tendency to render Milton's opinions as palatable as possible to the modern taste; speaking, for instance, of Milton's view of woman, Mr. Wolfe tells us that 'there is no reason to believe that in particular marriages Milton would not have advocated a husband's yielding himself to the superior personality of the wife'. There are good reasons to believe the contrary, even supposing Milton could have been brought to admit the possibility of such a prodigy. To finish with complaints, one has to record a fair sprinkling of grammatical solecisms.

Despite these faults the book has considerable merits. Some parts are distinctly better than others; the chapter, *Swords for a Kingless England*, dealing with events that led up to the abolition of the monarchy, is particularly good throughout. But the chief worth of the book lies in the accounts of the activities and views of Lilburn, Walwyn, Winstanley and other revolutionary contemporaries of Milton, and especially in the reproduction in the Appendix of some of their pamphlets. It would perhaps have been better if Mr. Wolfe had been content to present the documentary evidence on his subject, confining his commentary to a short introduction and notes; the substantial value of his work would then have stood out clearly.

B. A. WRIGHT.

**Henry Lawes, Musician and Friend of Poets.** By WILLA McCLUNG EVANS. New York: Modern Language Association of America; London: Humphrey Milford. 1941. Pp. xvi+250. 15s. 6d. net.

Impressive tributes were paid in his time to Henry Lawes by the poets whose lyrics he set to music. Those of Milton are the most famous, but Waller, Herrick, and many others were eager to testify to his skill. Poets appear to have plied him with verses to be set, pleading that their lines would gain expressiveness, attain success in the immediate object of the majority—courtship—and ultimately, enduring fame.<sup>1</sup> Yet when the student of literature turns to the histories of music, he will find but meagre notice of the song-writer whom the poets delighted to honour, and whose works seem to have been for over a decade the mainstay of John Playford, our first music publisher with a sense of his vocation. In Burney and Hawkins, Lawes has severe, even acrimonious critics; others are content to mention the name of Milton, 'from whose judgement', says one, 'there is no appeal'.

For the first time we have a full-length study of Lawes. Miss Willa Evans in 'Henry Lawes, Musician and Friend of Poets', has traced his career with abundant and carefully established detail. It is a career of many-sided interest, for Lawes is the most important link in the chain between the lutanists and Purcell; his life shows the conditions imposed on music-making by the Court of Charles I, the Commonwealth, and the Restoration; moreover Lawes set several hundred lyrics to music, and his literary friendships included some of the most distinguished names of the day. Miss Evans describes an interesting MS. in which Lawes

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the song-books are the only source of many seventeenth-century lyrics reprinted in modern anthologies has justified this last faith of theirs.

wrote almost four hundred songs, many of them unpublished. Reproductions of these are among the many illustrations.

Lawes was brought up at Dinton (Wilts) and Salisbury, where he was a chorister. In London he mounted the uncertain ladder of Court patronage, until he was securely established as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. In Court circles he formed many of his literary friendships; Court Masques led to collaboration with Carew and Davenant, while the Bridgwater Masques cemented a friendship with Milton, begun most probably under the roof of the elder John Milton, a contributor to 'The Triumphs of Oriana', whose hospitality would have been attractive to a young musician with his way to make. In her dealings with the Masque, Miss Evans is lavish with detail, indeed one is at times inclined to regret an exuberance of hypothesis on the commonplaces of dramatic production. But by her sensitiveness to the implications of detail considered against the background of events in general, she establishes some interesting points, and presents a lively picture of Lawes, busily devising elaborate entertainment, aware of the practical demands on his art, experimenting in the new art of recitative.

Milton's sonnet to Henry Lawes was apparently intended as a commendatory contribution to a volume of songs which Lawes would have published in 1645, but for the distraction of his brother's death at the Siege of Chester, and the troubles and subsequent execution of his royal patron. The sonnet made its first appearance with 'Choice Psalmes', 1648, prepared by Lawes for the use of Charles, who took the musical element in his devotions very seriously. Although deploring the 'sullen times' which followed, Lawes found leisure from masque-making and from singing in the King's services, which enabled him to publish his 'Ayres and Dialogues', all of which appeared in the Commonwealth period. He was at this time one of London's most famous teachers of music, which brought him fresh contacts, notably with the Matchless Orinda. Miss Evans produces evidence which suggests that at his house assembled a distinguished coterie to hear private recitals of music, concerts being as yet unheard of. The ban on drama gave him his chance to share with Davenant and others in the throes of the birth of English Opera, which passed muster as 'musical entertainment'. The wished-for Restoration, while it restored his old place and brought him honours, brought, too, the mortification of the King's preference for foreign musicians. Against the modish over-rating of these at the expense of the English tradition, Lawes had made vigorous protest in the earlier prefaces to his 'Ayres and Dialogues'. His death in 1662 prevented further contention and disappointment. From his biography emerges a character, which, as Burney harshly suggests, may well have tempted the friends and patrons of Lawes to over-rate him as a musician—loyal, eager to bestir himself in friendly offices, graceful in compliment, yet firm and manly.

Students of Milton will perhaps wish that the conclusion had been more conclusive. Curiosity about Lawes and his music has arisen mainly from 'Comus' and from the sonnet's quite precise appraisal of Lawes as an innovator.

Harry, whose tuneful and well measur'd song  
First taught our English music how to span  
Words with just note and accent, not to scan  
With Midas eares, committing short and long.

To use the language of mere literary compliment was not Milton's habit, yet Lawes was not the first who strove to 'couple his words and notes lovingly together'—the phrase is Campion's—and could be paralleled with others from



Morley or Robert Jones, who writes in 1600, 'My chiefest care was to fit the Note to the Word'. Just how did Lawes satisfy Milton where the great Elizabethans had failed? Some helpful points are made; there are frequent analyses of Lawes's melodic effects and there is generous illustration, but no full and satisfying answer. It is true that, as Miss Evans remarks, the answer would involve investigations disproportionate to the scope of the present treatise, and its omission in no way detracts from the valuable contribution she has made to the social and cultural history of the middle seventeenth century.

Her forthcoming publication of the lyrics set by Lawes should be of great interest, bringing to light a poet, Dr. Henry Hughes, hitherto little known, but highly esteemed by Lawes, who was probably something of a critic. His connection with the names of Herrick, Waller, Carew and Lovelace may not have been merely fortuitous, nor solely owing to their esteem for his musicianship, but to his own perception of literary quality. After all we owe it to Lawes that 'Comus' was written by Milton.

J. T. WISELY.

**Sir William Temple. The Man and his Work.** By HOMER E. WOODBRIDGE. 1940. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1940; London: H. Milford, 1941. Pp. xii+361. 21s. 6d. net.

Sir William Temple, though not a figure of first-rate importance either in history or in literature, enjoyed a considerable reputation in his own day and his works were six times reprinted in the eighteenth century. The biography by Courtenay appeared in 1836, but the Victorian age probably derived its opinion of him from Macaulay's essay, which was a review of this biography. Macaulay's verdicts are not as authoritative as they once were, and Professor Woodbridge's scholarly, soberly reasoned, and very readable book is the most important contribution yet made to the revaluation of Temple. On the most famous piece of literature with which Temple's name is connected, the *Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, he has little to add. With regard to the *Romances* he makes the point against Moore Smith that they almost certainly belong to Temple's second journey abroad. He naturally devotes a good deal of attention to the essays, which he holds to be the first 'really personal and familiar essays' written by any English author: his praise of them is discriminating, but in this respect Temple has little need of rehabilitation. The essay *On the Original and Nature of Government* has no doubt been unduly neglected; but perhaps Mr. Woodbridge is inclined to overrate its importance. On Temple's political career he has no fresh material to bring forward, but he from time to time offers a new interpretation. One of the best points he makes is as to the political purpose of the *Observations upon the United Provinces*—'the first serious and intelligent attempt to interpret the people and polity of one country systematically to another'. Temple's preface, carefully read, seems to bear out Mr. Woodbridge's view that 'by a careful and sympathetic account of the Dutch people, their history, institutions and government, he aimed to bring about a better understanding of Holland in England' at a time when Charles II's policy was leading in precisely the opposite direction. Mr. Woodbridge gives a similar political explanation for the appearance of the second part of the *Memoirs* in 1691—'he had declined to assist William by accepting public office, but he could and did help him by means of his pen'—and again claims for him a certain priority: 'Temple, I believe, was the first English statesman to publish an account of his public life in the form of memoirs'. This is a less substantial priority than



the others, for it concerns publication only: in the writing Clarendon and Ludlow, to name no others, preceded him. But the general effect of Mr. Woodbridge's study certainly is to raise one's estimate of the literary and political importance of Temple—to raise him in the second rank, indeed, not to elevate him to the first. He also makes one feel that the criticism of Temple's character has been overdone: the general impression of his relations with Swift is a distorted one and the charge of inordinate vanity is at any rate much exaggerated. Perhaps, however, he is not quite so successful in answering Macaulay's allusion to Temple's *gran rifiuto*. 'Detached moderation' is in itself a good quality; but Temple hardly rose to the occasion in 1679–81 like the great trimmer Halifax. It may be pedantic to point out one or two minor blemishes—Christ Church College (p. 6) and the reference (p. 105) to 'a certain Puffendorf', apparently the brother of the great jurist. These do not of course detract from the value of the book.

W. P. MORRELL.

**Swift and Defoe. A Study in Relationship.** By JOHN F. ROSS. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1941: University of California Press; London: Cambridge University Press, 1942. Pp. xii+152. 9s. net.

Swift never mentions Defoe's name. He refers to him in *A Letter concerning the Sacramental Test* as 'the fellow that was pilloried, I have forgot his name', and in the *Examiner* (no. 16) as a stupid illiterate scribbler, a fanatic by profession. Defoe speaks more freely of Swift. He is for him the late unhappy author whose book has gone up in 'blew strakes of livid flame called Blasphemy' and left a strange stench behind. Mr. Examiner in his Billingsgate Fury against the *Review* is like the Spaniel that barked at the Mastiff. *The Conduct of the Allies* jumps into the fray like a Gladiator in a Bear-Garden. The author of the *Wonder of Wonders* (the wild boy from Germany), Dr. S——, the Copper-Farthing Dean, 'can Preach and read Prayers in the Morning, write bawdy in the Afternoon, banter Heaven and Religion and write Prophanity at Night' [1726]. What exactly was the relationship between them? Did Defoe, as M. Dottin says, keep up a grudge against Swift all his life? Was he stung into attacking Swift in *The Consolidator* by the reference to *ears* in *A Tale of a Tub*? Was he angry because he had to slip down Harley's back-stairs while Swift with his head cocked strode up to his front steps? Such are the questions raised by Mr. Ross in the first three sections of this work and examined at length. His general conclusion is that Swift served Defoe 'chiefly as a tangible object upon which he could project his animus against the position and attitudes of a whole social class. . . . And the learned Dr. S—— could not be troubled to remember the name of the fellow who had been pilloried'.

The influence of the one on the other as writers does not amount to much. Mr. Examiner says that the *Review* reduces the art of government to the curing of herrings: the *Review* replies that without trade Englishmen would be hirelings and maids like the Swiss. Mr. Examiner becomes indignant at the silencing and 'rabbling' of Mr. Greenshields, an Episcopal clergyman, in Scotland: the *Review* replies that he was a non-juror and had come over from Ireland to make mischief. *The Consolidator* (1705) is an interesting example of literary interdependency. Mr. Ross demonstrates that the wonderful machines in the moon—the Elevator, the Cogitator and the Concionazimir—were suggested by Section IX of *A Tale of a Tub*, and the account of the pulpit made of *Sylva Caledonia*. When on the other hand Swift came to write *Gulliver* some twenty years later, he may have recol-

lected the account of the Consolidator itself, the vast chariot made of 531 feathers with which the Chinese ascended to the moon; and evolved out of it his Laputa, the Flying Island.

In the last three sections Mr. Ross contrasts the two in a general way, their prose and artistic methods, their backgrounds. It would be possible to quote much that is of interest from his pleasant discoursing. Speaking of the style he says: 'We get, in Defoe's long, loose, oral sentences, all the details, reflections, and loose associations which pour up into consciousness. . . . This does not necessarily cause confusion, but it lessens the weight and effect of any one particular. Swift, however, has a great economy of detail, which, in tight sentence structure of slower pace, is selective and emphatic'. No doubt it is due to this that one can read *Gulliver* for the twentieth time and yet go on discovering new turns of wit and invention. Once one has read *Robinson Crusoe*, one knows it till time wipes it from the memory. Yet I feel that I am sometimes being dragged at the heels of Mr. Ross's argument. After a luminous discussion of irony he says that *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* is rather a realistic picture of the High-Fliers than a piece of good irony, for in good irony the meaning must come through. But had it not an explosive force? The great art of irony is to time the bomb to go off at the last possible moment. That is how Pascal practised it. It may be allowed that Defoe came a fraction too late. But I venture to suggest that Swift learned something from the *Shortest Way* when he wrote the ironical praise of our colonization in the last chapter of *Gulliver's Travels* and the *Answer to the Craftsman*.

Mr. Ross calls Defoe a plebeian, one of the lower middle class, a sound Chamber of Commerce man: he presents Swift as an aristocrat, and further an aristocrat at a time when aristocracy was decadent and doomed. Not only Hector died, all Troy fell, he says dramatically. I had always understood from reading Burke that the English aristocracy played its part in the eighteenth century. Such vast swoops of generalizing make one wish for the Lunarian Glasses. It is true that Swift and Defoe were at a cross-roads, and that while Defoe took the way of 'progress', Swift stood still, crying 'Stop your colonizing, stop your imports, stop your high-flying philosophers and scientists: every man to his own manger'. If people had listened to him, we might have avoided this war. But then we might have been long ago a Department of France or a province of the Reich.

In a last section Mr. Ross insists on some basic similarities between Robinson Crusoe and Lemuel Gulliver. They are unaccommodated men, poor, bare, and forked, mankind stripped of its lendings. But the point is that Gulliver took off his clothes while Robinson put them on.

W. D. TAYLOR.

**Grongar Hill.** By JOHN DYER. Edited with Introduction and Notes by Richard C. Boys. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press; London: Humphrey Milford. Pp. xiv + 114. 10s. 6d. net.

It was a happy notion to set out the successive things which Dyer made of Grongar Hill, and the student of eighteenth-century poetry will welcome the sequence of texts and textual evidence which, after the ampler splendour of the pindaric, regularizes itself into tetrameters. (Professor Boys repeatedly calls the tetrameter versions of the poem 'octosyllabic', but the term is inapplicable to a poem the metre of which relies for its effect on the interchange of eight- and

seven-syllable lines.) But it seems that his welcome will need to be cautious and provisional. I have succeeded in checking the editor's accuracy only in his version of the final 1761 text. That version of a text only 158 lines long shows four misprints, one of which is trivial ('Phoebus' for 'Phœbus'), but three of which are not trivial, since the erring letters do not happen to prevent their correct fellows from joining with them to form words: l. 10, for 'the' read 'thy'; l. 86, for 'been' read 'seen'; l. 125, for 'do' read 'to'. With that as evidence, we cannot give Professor Boys's work the welcome it may otherwise deserve till we have checked the rest of the transcriptions.

Here and there Professor Boys has a new point to make in his account, say, of the reputation of *Grongar Hill*, but if we look in his small book for much of value and novelty besides texts, we shall look in vain. Perhaps the heaviest charge to be made against the 'letterpress' of the book is that, though Professor Boys says many things both about Dyer's poems and about the poetry of the eighteenth century generally, he says little that makes for the better understanding of either. He is unworthy of a subject which he fails to recognize as a subtle one. This would not matter very much in a work mainly to be consulted for its texts, if he did not employ his critical sense to serve his task as textual commentator:

There has been considerable confusion over the priority of *E* [the version included 'in D. Lewis's *Miscellaneous Poems* . . . (1726)'] and *C* [the version included 'in *A New Miscellany*, which may have been published in 1726']. Although Professor Aubin speaks of *C* as the final version, I believe that *C* preceded *E*, because in almost all of the numerous differences between *E* and *C*, *E* shows a trend away from the stereotyped neo-classic diction of Dyer's time.

Such confidence would startle us in a critic as perceptive as Coleridge. Nor do the examples given reassure:

For instance, the *E*

Painting fair the form of Things (*E* 5)

is fresher than the *C*

Contemplating the Shapes of Things (*C* 5)

and *E* also shows Dyer's growing fondness for alliteration, which he uses so lavishly in the final text [p. 53].

We feel that we cannot trust our editor.

Moreover, we cannot trust him as a commentator. Instead of clearing he obscures. He finds more difficulty in Dyer's way of saying things than exists. He is baffled (p. 63) by ll. 7-10 of the following paragraph:

About his chequer'd sides I wind,  
And leave his brooks and meads behind,  
And groves, and grottoes where I lay,  
And vistles shooting beams of day:  
Wide and wider spreads the vale;  
As circles on a smooth canal:  
The mountains round, unhappy fate!  
Sooner or later, of all height,  
Withdraw their summits from the skies,  
And lessen as the others rise:  
Still the prospect wider spreads,  
Adds a thousand woods and meads,  
Still it widens, widens still,  
And sinks the newly-risen hill.

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(I quote the version of 1761, the only one I have access to in the original.) Professor Boys discusses the passage as follows:

One other obscure line in the *E* and *F* [i.e. the 1761] texts is cleared up by the *C* version. There is some chance of misinterpretation in

The Mountains round, unhappy Fate,  
Sooner or later, of all Height!  
Withdraw their Summits from the Skies,  
And lessen as the others rise. . . .

That the word 'round' is not an adjective can be seen from the corresponding line in *C*:

The Mountains 'round', unhappy Fate!

[Something has gone badly wrong here: as given in the complete *C* version (pp. 69 ff.), the couplet to which that line belongs reads:

The Mountain's 'round (unhappy Fate!  
Sooner or later, of all Height!)]

But helpful as *C* is in determining the poet's meaning in these cases it does not, unfortunately, throw any light on the rest of the same passage, one of the most obscure in the whole poem. The latter part offers a fairly simple solution; as the poet walks up Grongar the nearby peaks seem to decrease in height, while those at a distance appear to rise. The first two lines remain something of a mystery. The 'unhappy Fate' in particular is difficult to explain. However, the lines apparently mean something like: "The mountains, as is, unfortunately, true sooner or later of all heights, sink as we go up the hill".

Mountains out of molehills! The *O.E.D.* readily explains 'to round' as meaning 'To have or assume a curved or rounded form'; and the unhappy fate of all heights presents no difficulty if 'all heights' is allowed to mean what it says and to include the heights attained by 'eminent' men as well as by hills. Dyer, as so often, is speaking on the human theme, as Pope was speaking on it in the Alpine simile of his *Essay on Criticism*: it is the unhappy fate of all who occupy lofty positions to have their positions seen as level ones by rivals who sooner or later mount as high as they, and as inferior ones by rivals who mount higher still. In his summary (p. 64) Professor Boys finds comfort in Johnson's remark that *Grongar Hill* was 'not indeed very accurately written', but there is also Johnson's weighty praise of its 'reflections', reflections which he saw as 'so consonant to the general sense or experience of mankind'. From Dyer's descriptions the human comment is never absent for long.

It seems also worth while to attempt to clear up another passage which Professor Boys and some of his predecessors have found difficult. The final version of the poem opens:

Silent Nymph, with curious eye!  
Who, the purple ev'ning, lie  
On the mountain's lonely van,  
Beyond the noise of busy man,  
Painting fair the form of things,  
While the yellow linet sings;  
Or the tuneful nightingale  
Charms the forest with her tale;  
Come with all thy various hues,  
Come, and aid thy sister Muse;  
Now while Phœbus riding high  
Gives lustre to the land and sky!  
Grongar Hill invites my song,  
Draw the landskip bright and strong. . . .

The pindaric version of the poem had opened as follows :

*Fancy!* Nymph, that loves to lye  
On the lonely Eminence ;  
Darting Notice thro' the Eye,  
Forming Thought, and feasting Sense :  
Thou! that must lend Imagination Wings,  
And stamp Distinction, on all worldly Things!  
Come, and with thy various *Hues*,  
Paint and adorn thy *Sister* Muse.

But though some of the characteristics attributed to fancy are attributed also to the 'Silent Nymph' of the later version, these common characteristics need not imply that the two creatures are identical. The nymph of the later version is surely intended to represent painting. She is asked to help her sister muse, that is, to help Dyer write his pictorial poem. She is called silent because the painter, unlike the poet or musician, does not use sounds. She relies instead on colours and forms discovered through the eye, an eye which is therefore more curious than that of the poet needs to be. (Cf. Dyer's *To a Famous Painter* (1726) :

To me reveal thy heav'nly art,  
To me thy mysteries impart.  
As yet I but in verse can paint,  
And to th' idea colour faint,  
What to th' open eye you show . . .)

It was on just these distinctions that Lessing was to found his *Laocoon*. 'The purple evening' is of course a temporal phrase; cf. Collins's *Ode to Evening*: 'Elves/Who slept in Buds the Day'. 'Lie', strictly speaking, should be 'lyest', unless, as seems likely, Dyer was aiming at conveying the sense 'art wont to lie'.

Charles James Fox criticized Mrs. Barbauld for a similar usage: see *Recollections by Samuel Rogers*, 1859, p. 38 :

Repeated with Mrs. Fox that song of Mrs. Barbauld's, 'Come here, fond youth, who e'er thou be'—the first verse full of bad grammar.

GEOFFREY TILLOTSON.

**Thraliana. The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale (Later Mrs. Piozzi) 1776-1809.** Edited by KATHARINE C. BALDERSTON. Published in co-operation with the Huntington Library. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1942. 2 vols. pp. xxxii+1191. Vol. I (1776-1784), pp. xxxii+610; vol. II (1784-1809) pp. iv+611-1191. 42s.

*Thraliana* has the defects and merits of a book not prepared for publication. It is diffuse and repetitive; some of it is downright dull; and its inherent formlessness makes the reading of one thousand and ninety-nine pages a stiff task. If Mrs. Piozzi had prepared it for the posthumous publication which she sometimes hoped for, she would have cut, arranged, and polished. But such a process would have left a much less valuable record both of her own personality and of the society in which she lived. For modesty would have induced her to conceal many reflexions recorded in the heat of first feeling; and believer though she was in the importance of preserving the apparently trivial, she must inevitably have elected to discard details which throw some light for later readers on the times in which she lived. The freshness, the 'immediacy', of *Thraliana* is therefore the source of its good and bad qualities. All that came to Mrs. Piozzi's mind she wrote down without stopping to choose. The choice is left to her readers, who may either



accept the selections made long since by Hayward and by Hughes, or applaud Miss Balderston and the Clarendon Press for allowing them to make their own.

By the publication of *Thraliana* we can understand more clearly than ever before what it was about Mrs. Piozzi which attracted and repelled her acquaintances. She had a reputation as a Blue Stocking, even if she did not belong to Mrs. Montagu's inner circle. *Thraliana* shows that though well read Mrs. Piozzi was not remarkable for her learning, and one might guess that what was more congenial to such a friend as Johnson was her turn for speculation and her capacity for generalizing, as shown by her interest in etymology or (to take particular examples) by her observation on the advantages which women have over men in business (p. 313), or by her deductions from the choices which her friends made when asked what other man's life they would wish to have led (pp. 377 ff). *Thraliana* is a good record of Mrs. Piozzi's wit as well as of her wisdom, but it is an even better record of her vivacity. Page after page shows how resilient her responses were to everyday events. There are few incidents which are not coloured in the telling by the emotion accompanying their first experience. It would be easy to choose examples from the entries written at the time of Thrale's last illness or before her marriage with Piozzi, but perhaps more striking is her casual record (p. 438) of seeing the poet, Jerningham:

I saw M<sup>r</sup> Jerningham the Poet at Bath too, & took a strong Aversion to him: so finical, so despicable, so delicate. he had got a Harp, & he was to sing to it: so he whispered his Airs out in so soft a Warble that one could not hear him: & then the door must be open'd, & then the Fire must be put out, & then he must have two Candles to shew off his Figure, & then the Carpet must be rolled up, & then he must have some Milk & Water—and then he sung Arne's Ballads.

M<sup>rs</sup> Montagu said Oh! M<sup>r</sup> Jerningham! he is a favourite Child of the Muses—silly pedantic Stuff.

The book is full of similar brief impressions of her contemporaries, written down, it is true, without much attempt at considered judgment, and indicative perhaps of her capacity for sudden aversions and equally sudden attractions. Yet she could judge candidly too, as she shows when recalling her treatment of her old tutor, Dr. Collier, and her early married life with Thrale.

*Thraliana* also helps us to obtain a clearer view of the age and its difference in several small particulars from our own. Broad stories were more generously admitted into mixed society. The pun was more widely admired: 'D<sup>r</sup> Vyse cried out then all Impromptu what Ecclesiastical Writer would your Spectacles name? if they could speak: Eusebius without a doubt—You see by us' (p. 682). Verses equally impromptu were more often exchanged and capped by translation into another language. And Biblical prophecy rather than the Stars encouraged Mrs. Piozzi and her contemporaries to foresee the downfall of the country's enemies. 'How comical a Thing did I hear Yesterday!' she writes (p. 852) 'as if it was made on purpose (which it was not) to ridicule me and all such unlearned & ill-qualified Pokers into Prophecy': the curate had told her of a man who was convinced it would go hard with the French from having read in Isaiah these remarkable words 'Mount Seir shall be laid low'.

But the chief value of *Thraliana* is to be found in its collection of Johnsoniana. Professor Nichol Smith's edition has prepared us for discovering here the earliest manuscript versions of several of Johnson's poems. On this therefore there is no need to enlarge. Miss Balderston brings conclusive evidence to show that Mrs. Piozzi wrote her *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson* with *Thraliana* beside her. It was



in fact the immediate source of five-ninths of the published work. Those who care to do so are now enabled to watch Mrs. Piozzi as she prepares Johnson's conversation for the press, padding here, embellishing there, softening a too violent retort, and even crediting Johnson with a witticism which her source showed her to have been made by another, but rendering on the whole a moderately truthful account of Johnson's actual conversation. Moderately truthful, but not always sufficiently. Readers of the *Anecdotes* will remember Johnson's reflexions on the evening he once spent with Molly Aston—'That indeed was not happiness, it was rapture; but the thoughts of it sweetened the whole year'—and the story of his wife being put out of countenance by a gipsy who said that Johnson's heart was divided 'between a Betty and a Molly: Betty loves you best, but you take most delight in Molly's Company. When I turned about to laugh, I saw my wife was crying. Pretty charmer! she had no reason!' It is disconcerting to turn to the source in *Thraliana* and to find that Mrs. Piozzi had no evidence before her for words which add something not unimportant to our knowledge of Johnson. It is also disappointing to find that many of the best things in the *Anecdotes* are without their parallel in *Thraliana* and may therefore have been derived from Mrs. Piozzi's not too trustworthy memory. We do not know how much was Mrs. Piozzi and how much Johnson in his criticism of Murphy's *Zenobia* (*Anecdotes*, p. 332), and his alleged opinion of Brussels lace trimming (*ibid.* p. 338). The delightful incident of the disrespectful sailor (*ibid.* p. 334) is not to be found. And now that Miss Balderston has taught us to be suspicious, we can never be certain whether in fact Johnson said (*ibid.* p. 328) that he 'loved to see a knot of little misses dearly'. We should like to be sure, since it is the domestic Johnson speaking, for which we rely on Mrs. Piozzi's record rather than on Boswell's.

Miss Balderston's editing is commendable at every place where it has been possible to make a check. Her annotation is sufficient rather than lavish. Occasionally one asks for more. Does the *Life of Mr. Ephraim Bates* resemble *Tristram Shandy* as Mrs. Thrale seemed to think (p. 23)? Perhaps one ought to know; but one would like to be reminded in passing, just as one would like to be reminded (p. 169) of the remark which Johnson passed on Lady Macdonald and which Boswell (or Malone) discreetly erased from the published version of the *Tour to the Hebrides*. One of the problems Miss Balderston has had to face is the identification of the innumerable persons mentioned in *Thraliana*. To have provided even a brief biographical sketch would have swelled a book already large enough, and so Miss Balderston has ingeniously combined a biographical dictionary with the index. This is satisfactory, by and large. But Miss Balderston makes her exceptions on principles which are not altogether clear. If Sophia Streatfield's mother is allowed a note, why not allow notes for her daughter and Dr. Collier, too? The index, however, is both full and sufficient, the introduction admirably concise and judicious, and the analysis of the provenance of the *Anecdotes* (Appendix B), taken in conjunction with the footnote references, is all that a collator could require. Your reviewer has not stopped to investigate the bibliographical problem presented by the page references made to the Introduction in the footnotes, which (so far as they have been checked) are always two pages out.

JOHN BUTT.

**Three Tours through London in the years 1748, 1776, 1797.** By WILMARTH SHELDON LEWIS. New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1941. Pp. xii+135. \$2.50; 15s. 6d. net.

Mr. Lewis, editor of the Yale edition of Walpole's Correspondence, has devised an excellent plan for a survey of London in the second half of the eighteenth century, that of the recorded impressions of an American visitor in three specific years. Thus he eliminates the pastiche, to which writers of social history are so prone, in which conditions at different dates are combined to make a picture, and precise chronology is sacrificed to the general effect. The visitor is Mr. Lewis himself, a traveller in time as well as in space, who records the impressions of a peculiarly well-instructed tourist. The device is one which involves the frank admission that we cannot see the past with the eyes of contemporaries; but by a skilful use of contemporary sources, based on a wide knowledge of the literature of the period and of the shifting moral climate of the age, three short visits to London are described. The documentation is precise and the references are in their proper place, at the foot of the page. A vivid impressionist picture is thus built up, touch by touch, of three stages in the life of the town, its topography, its décor, its changing sights and growing amenities. Mr. Lewis reminds his readers that 'however diligent and eager tourists may be, they are not, after all, expected to see everything'. In choosing the years for his visits, Mr. Lewis takes 1797, as the last year of the century, just before it ended with the publication of *The Lyrical Ballads*, when 'professors of English Literature tell us that the eighteenth century properly ended'. This gives 1748 as the beginning of the half-century which he wishes to cover, and the intermediate date is the inevitable choice for 'a patriotic American'. The half-century happens also exactly to cover the life of Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill: in 1797 Mr. Lewis arrives just after the death of the man with whom he has been so intimately associated, and he gives a most interesting account of a visit to Strawberry, where the finishing touches had been given by Wyatt, 'in what Walpole called "the collegiate style" as opposed to the "cathedral and castle styles" in which the earlier rooms were built' (p. 111). The years chosen were all years of crisis, more or less, but there was an increasing tempo, culminating in what, before 1914, might well have been judged the most critical in English history, when as Lord Holland said 'one sensation followed another'. It opened with what Lord Melbourne considered to have been one of the occasions when Providence intervened to save the British Empire. That episode, which ended at Bantry Bay, was over before Mr. Lewis's arrival at Portsmouth, to find himself in the middle of the Naval Mutiny. He is betrayed into the assertion, natural enough in the circumstances, that 'Captain Bligh is representative of the brutality of the officers', surely a generalization just neither to Bligh nor the Navy.

The illustrations are well chosen and interesting, but poorly reproduced. They are documents of value, and deserve better treatment. The reviewer wishes to take this opportunity of protesting against the common practice of failing to give precise descriptions of contemporary prints used as book illustrations. Too often it is not made clear whether the title of the print is contemporary, or whether it is an invented caption, and the publication line is generally omitted. Four plates to this book will serve as illustrations to a plea for more careful documentation. The plate styled 'Piccadilly at St. James's Street, 1750,' clearly represents, not the normal traffic, but some special occasion, involving spectators and a procession of coaches driving from west to east. The 'Riot at Covent Garden, 1763,' gives

an excellent view of the stage, but we should like to know which of the many theatre riots is in progress, and what play is being performed (is it *Artaxerxes*?). The picture of 'Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in *Macbeth*' is 'from a mezzotint by Green, after a painting by Zoffany, 1776'. So far so good, but the date applies to the mezzotint, the picture has its importance in the history of the theatre, and it does not belong to 1776. Mrs. Pritchard left the stage in 1768 and died in the same year; this must be her farewell performance, on 24 April, when she played Lady Macbeth. Garrick plays Macbeth in contemporary costume, which was no longer done in 1776. It was a landmark in stage history when, on 3 October, 1773, Macklin played Macbeth in Scottish costume, although his 'flowing curls, like the locks of an Adonis, were unpardonably out of character'.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lewis's account of the stage is so good, that it seems a pity that theatrical illustrations should be inadequately described. Then again 'May-Day in London' is correctly given as 'from the *Wit's Magazine*, 1784', but why should the artists' names, which appear on the print (though not on the reproduction) be omitted: 'Collings del. Blake sculp.' Samuel Collings is not a quite negligible artist, and though this was hack-work by Blake, his handiwork is still of interest, not to speak of the association of the subject (little chimney-sweepers) with one of the *Songs of Innocence*. The careful documentation of the text in this book makes the treatment of the illustrations conspicuous.

M. D. GEORGE.

**The Mind of a Poet. A Study of Wordsworth's Thought with particular reference to 'The Prelude'.** By RAYMOND DEXTER HAVENS. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press; London: Humphrey Milford. 1941. Pp. xviii + 670. \$5.00.

This weighty work, heavy in physical bulk as well as in intellectual content, is nevertheless a labour of love. It will be hailed by Professor Havens's fellow Wordsworthians as an earnest, sincere, and scholarly contribution to the understanding of a poet whose thought will always be difficult to understand. No such study can be exhaustive without being also exhausting. Professor Havens in his 640 pages attempts more than mortal man can do: first, a complete line by line exegesis of *The Prelude*, a work requiring for its interpretation a poet's insight and imagination; and secondly, a critical study which aims, but with a true and disarming humility, at leaving no depth unsounded of Wordsworth's strange, deep mind. Now this modest critic has the courage to admit at the outset that he attempts the impossible, for he places as his motto on the sub-title page these lines from *The Prelude*:

Of genius, power,  
Creation and divinity itself  
I have been speaking, for my theme has been  
What passed within me. . . .

This is in truth heroic argument,  
This genuine prowess, which I wished to touch  
With hand however weak, but in the main  
It lies far hidden from the reach of words.

If the poet himself admits that the most vital things he has to say lie far hidden from the reach of words, the critic must find himself handicapped a

<sup>1</sup> *Macaroni and Theatrical Magazine*, ii, 8.

hundredfold, for whilst the poet can call upon words pulsing with rhythm and alive with appeal to the imagination, the critic can only use the unwinged words of prose.

Professor Havens applies the method of prose interpretation with a quiet common sense, a patient, thoughtful thoroughness, and a fundamental faith in the modest usefulness of his task which merit the warmest commendation. There is after all something in the method which would commend it to Wordsworth, himself a matter-of-fact man with a sound sense of the plain meaning of things. He said to his nephew at the end of his life: 'My main endeavour as to style has been that my poems should be written in pure intelligible English'—a plain and sensible aim. He wanted to be understood.

Professor Havens's commentary, carefully documented and opening up a wide field of reference, will help the student to understand him. He keeps a balanced judgment and is throughout a safe guide. He is not misled by the psychologists—see for example his sane conclusion upon the episode of Wordsworth's love for Annette Vallon and its place in his life; again, in his summing up of Wordsworth's religious beliefs he exaggerates neither the orthodox Anglican elements nor the pantheistic, but pays due heed to the different strands in his thought and the different layers of his experience. The chief defect of his method is his tendency to over-labour a point, to cite *all* the instances, to refer to every parallel passage. It does not illuminate our knowledge of Wordsworth to be told the number of times that he uses the words 'silence' and 'alone'. Statistics are always misleading, and never more so, one would suppose, than when applied to the unpredictable, invulnerable form of poetry.

But the best tribute we can pay to Professor Havens's faithful and learned work of interpretation is to point out what seem to be here and there dull spots, and to offer one or two further lights that might be thrown on Wordsworth's meaning.

His chapter on Wordsworth's conception of Nature, fully as it refers to the vital passages, and sanely as it comments upon them, fails to plumb the depths of Wordsworth's mind and meaning. He combats Wordsworth's plea that Genius 'finds in Nature his best and purest friend', since she furnishes the 'interchange of peace and excitation' by which he thrives, with the contention that people are likely to find such interchange more easily in a city, if the general tenor of their life is quiet, than in the country. 'Intellectually and morally', he concludes, 'Wordsworth would have been much the same if he had been reared in London.' The answer to this is—read the first Book of *The Prelude* and ponder especially the lines beginning 'Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe'; also those from 'Tintern Abbey' where the poet says that he is

well pleased to recognize  
In Nature and the language of the sense,  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
The guide the guardian of my heart, and soul  
Of all my moral being:

keeping in mind Andrew Bradley's wise dictum, quoted by Professor Havens in another connection: 'The road into Wordsworth's mind must be through his strangeness and his paradoxes and not round them'.

The paradox through which we penetrate to Wordsworth's thought about Nature lies in the connection established in such passages as these between the life of the senses and the intellectual, moral and spiritual life. We shall get no

nearer to the heart of Wordsworth's experience with Nature till we realize that at its height the barriers between the sensuous and the spiritual fall away. He himself invoked 'Ye powers of soul and sense mysteriously allied', and spoke of 'the incumbent mystery of sense and soul'. But this was the later comment of his intellect. In his early experiences themselves what the ear heard or the eye saw sank then and there into his heart or into his mind:

a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery.

It was the clarity and simplicity, the purity and *wholeness* of his experiences as a child that gave them their value and their lasting influence upon his thought and moral life—experiences in which sense and soul were one; in which there was no division, no double process; the whole being was raised to an intensity of life. We have to take the poet's word for it: this was no passing excitement, but something that entered into his mind and character, and directed his genius. The title which he gave the lines, 'Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe', on its first publication in 'The Friend', gives the right clue in its plain prosaic statement: 'Growth of genius from the influences of natural objects on the imagination in Boyhood and early youth'. Professor Havens thinks that Wordsworth makes an 'astounding affirmation' when he contends that 'great poetry will mean far more to a man if as a boy he was "a daily wanderer among woods and fields"', and he asserts that 'in attributing to nature much of what was best in his own personality Wordsworth overlooked the excellent stock from which he came', etc. But Wordsworth was a singularly truthful man and he took great pains to tell the truth about his own inner life and development. We must believe what he says.

A point that needs correction in this chapter on Nature is the statement that William Wordsworth has no place for Storms in his conception of the external world. 'They are not necessarily harmful', urges Professor Havens, 'and he might well have dwelt on their beauty . . . yet I recall no description of them in his poetry'. I would refer Professor Havens to *Excursion* IV, 508 ff., *Prelude* II, 306, and the MSS. passages given on pages 554 and 601 in Professor de Selincourt's edition of *The Prelude*. There is no question of Wordsworth's enjoyment of storms: does he not speak of 'that giddy bliss Which like a tempest works along the blood'?

Professor Havens devotes a full and discerning chapter to 'The Mystic Experience'. Definition and clear distinction between phases of this experience are, as he rightly owns, difficult: but Wordsworth himself distinguishes two states of mind that stood out with a peculiar significance in his spiritual life, and our understanding of a subtle matter is aided if we attend to his distinction. They are both unusual states of mind, known to him as a boy, in which the ordinary world familiar to our senses is transcended. The one is a trance-like state in which the images of the external world take on a peculiar vividness yet seem unreal, as if they were the images of a dream. The scene becomes in Wordsworth's phrase 'like something in myself, a dream, A prospect in the mind' (*Prelude* II, 350). The images, lively and clear in all their natural lineaments, are touched with a visionary significance. In the other experience, more unusual but equally authentic, moving images of the sense, or the memory of them, take him over the



threshold into a state of absorbed contemplation or spiritual communion which is of the essence of the mystic experience :

the light of sense  
Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed  
The invisible world. (Prelude VI, 600.)

He cannot describe the experience, for it is a state of *being*; it is empty of images, not to be pictured with words; he can only lead us to the threshold, and tell us afterwards what effect it left upon his mind, for

the soul  
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt  
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense  
Of possible sublimity . . . (Prelude II, 334.)

This, the core of the mystical experience, is absolutely distinct from the dream-like state in which images have a peculiar clearness and radiance.

The part played by images in Wordsworth's poetic mind is another theme that we could have wished Professor Havens to develop more fully.

One final word of praise is due to him for the careful references given in a formidable body of notes, and for the ample Index, which greatly increases the usefulness of his book.

HELEN DARBISHIRE.

**Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth.** Edited by E. DE SELINCOURT. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 1941. 2 vols. Pp. xxvi+443 and viii+434. 36s. net.

Professor de Selincourt's edition of Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journals* is a fitting tribute to 'the most distinguished of English writers who never wrote a line for the general public', for it is with the zeal inspired by that evaluation that he has performed his arduous task. At long last the 'general public' have the opportunity to judge for themselves in an ungarbled and unabridged text whether Dorothy Wordsworth deserves the devotion of her admirers, from the time of her brother and Coleridge to the present day.

The present writer, who is proud to number herself among the enthusiasts, has no hesitation in asserting that the closer the intimacy with Dorothy Wordsworth the greater is the fascination she exercises on her acquaintances. Consequently, since the *Journals* are a reflection of her personality, containing the unrestrained outpourings of her moods, feelings, thoughts, opinions, imagination, and fancies as well as the record of her doings and experiences, trivial or important, they present us with the material required for an estimation of her mind and character. Professor de Selincourt says of *The Grasmere Journal* that it can be justly appreciated only 'when its private intimate character is borne in mind. Here, indeed, lies much of its undying charm . . . it makes no pretension to continuous literary form . . . side by side with acute perception and quick sympathetic response to all that surrounded her in the worlds of man and nature . . . are the homeliest details . . . of the goings-on of everyday. A more beautiful book might doubtless be made by rigorous selection from its contents. Yet this juxtaposition of entries on such widely different emotional levels, with its inevitable inconsequence, stamps the whole as a veritable transcript of real life; and the greater moments are thrown into a stronger relief by their work-a-day setting. The result is a precious human document'.

The measure of Dr. de Selincourt's achievement may be gauged by a com-



parison of his edition with Knight's selections which omit many of the 'trivialities' that contribute to the vividness of the impression conveyed. To give only one example. At the end of the long entry on 8 June, 1802, describing a visit to Windermere, the journalist tells how the poet walked out and 'wrote that poem, "The sun has long been set", etc. *He first went up to G. Mackareth's with the horse*, afterwards he walked on our own path and wrote the lines; he called me into the orchard, and there repeated them to me—he then stayed there till 11 o'clock. 9<sup>th</sup> June Wednesday. *Wm. slept ill. A soaking all day rain. We should have gone to Mr. Simpson's to tea but we walked up after tea: Lloyds called. The hawthorns on the mountain sides like orchards in blossom. Brought rhubarb down. It rained hard. Ambleside fair. I wrote to Christy. and M.H.*' Knight did not print the italicised portions: and so throughout, with great loss to the total effect.

It has seemed natural to begin with the *Grasmere Journal*, because it is the most revealing of the writer, and on that account, and also because it covers so important a period in the poet's life, is in some respects the most attractive of all. But it is time to examine the contents of the two volumes more systematically. The first contains a brief descriptive preface with an account of the MS. sources and of the editor's use of them. *The Alfoxden Journal* (1798) is of necessity given from Knight's text since no manuscript has been found; 'the *Journals* kept by Dorothy in Germany (1798) and at Grasmere (1800-1803) are now for the first time given in their entirety', the text being taken from the four small note-books in which they were jotted down among miscellaneous memoranda. The *Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland* exists in five manuscripts for it was carefully composed and revised and was not 'a Journal, for we took no notes, but recollections of our tour in the form of a Journal', designed expressly for 'the sake of a few friends, who, it seemed, ought to have been with us'. Dr. de Selincourt calls this book of travel her masterpiece, and it was only through a hitch in the negotiations that it was not published in her life-time. He prints from what he calls MS. B, Dorothy's second copy written in a quarto volume and finished, according to a note on the last page, on 21 February, 1806. It is a revised version, with several additions to MS. A, Mrs. Clarkson's transcript from the original text, and also with a considerable number of minor alterations 'obviously aimed at rendering the style less colloquial'. These alterations are very often far from improvements: the additions are of another order and include such passages as that for August 18 'which begins with a reference to Drayton and ends with four stanzas addressed by her brother to the Sons of Burns', or 'that she added to September 3, the apt quotation of the poem *Brook and Road*'. Dr. de Selincourt holds that this MS. 'unquestionably preserves the best text of the *Recollections*', but though he follows the example of Shairp in publishing it, he corrects Shairp's errors in transcription and follows Dorothy's division of her book into three parts. He also gives a full description of the other MSS., one of which was copied for Coleridge by Sara Hutchinson while another represents 'a stage in the text intermediary between MSS. A and B'. MS. D was made when the book was being prepared for the press in 1822-3 and consequently omits many personal details, while it also introduces 'such historical or legendary information as a literary guide-book was expected to supply'. The editor gives in an Appendix some of the more interesting additions made to the latest text 'and also the revised version of her first day's travel, which illustrates better, perhaps, than any other passage, the general character of her revision'.

The first volume of the *Journals* also includes the brief accounts of the *Excur-*

sion on the Banks of Ullswater (1805), not hitherto published in a complete form, and of the *Excursion up Scaufell Pike* (1818). Both of these were included in 'a much altered version' in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1823), and the latter also in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1822).

Finally the first Appendix to this volume comprises 'Notes on some of the Persons mentioned in the *Grasmere Journal*, compiled by the late Gordon Graham Wordsworth, grandson of the poet who 'had an unrivalled knowledge of local history'.

Volume II contains the *Journals of A Tour on the Continent* (1820), *My Second Tour in Scotland* (1822), *A Tour in the Isle of Man* (1828), together with an *Index of Places and Persons* (eight and a half pages double column), and an *Index of References to the Poems of William Wordsworth*. The *Journal of a Tour on the Continent* recounts the history of the journey through France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy taken by the three Wordsworths, Thomas Monkhouse, his bride, her sister, and their maid. They set out on 10 July, Crabb Robinson joined the party at Lucerne on 16 August, and Paris was reached on the homeward journey on 1 October. Dorothy's *Journal* was compiled after their return, from notes made during the tour: it is much fuller than the *Recollections* and even in the final corrected transcript, now the only known MS., 'it runs to 745 closely written quarto pages'. Dr. de Selincourt has 'reduced its bulk by rather less than a quarter' by 'omitting some trivial details and such descriptions of scenery as were repetitive or of little interest'. Even so, he has printed about four times as much as has been previously published, and the reader if not at all likely to agree with Dorothy's verdict that the *Journal* is 'utterly unsatisfactory . . . as a description of Switzerland' is likely to share the opinion of the friends for whom it was written that there is too much of it. It is too elaborate in scale and would have gained by compression and omissions. Yet its present editor is surely justified in saying that modern travellers 'could hardly take with them a better companion volume to their *Baedeker* or *Blue Guide*'.

The *Journal of my Second Tour in Scotland*, the account of a holiday with Joanna Hutchinson, is chiefly interesting from its contrast to the *Recollections*, but 'it contains some vivid and characteristic writing'. The *Journal of a Tour in the Isle of Man* is the record of a visit to Joanna and Henry Hutchinson, the only consecutive portion of rough diaries kept fitfully between 1824 and 1833. The visit in 1828 is described in two of the 'eleven shabby little note-books' which contain the diaries: these are printed in full, in great part for the first time. The journal is of special interest in showing that Dorothy's alertness of mind and activity of body survived until almost the moment of her breakdown in the following year: there is little or nothing in the *Journal* to suggest any diminution of her powers of observation or 'her gift for delineating' the life about her.

Both volumes contain elucidatory notes including some by Gordon Wordsworth and by Knight and Shairp; there are some excellent illustrations and seven maps which greatly facilitate the reader's understanding of the text. In brief the publisher's claim that this is a 'final and definitive edition of these famous journals' is wholly justified by its contents and appearance.

EDITH J. MORLEY.

**The English Notebooks.** By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. Based upon the original manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library and edited by Randall Stewart. New York: Modern Language Association of America; London: Oxford University Press. 1941. Pp. xlv+668. 36s. net.

It is difficult to write a review of this book which shall not be a rewording and précis of the preface and introduction. The first explains its genesis and the principles on which the editor has worked: it is the second of three projected volumes which are to give us the true texts of Hawthorne's journals, *The American Notebooks* having already appeared with the same editor in 1932, and *The Italian Notebooks* to follow as soon as Mr. Norman Holmes Pearson has prepared it. All three are to go behind the 'extremely bowdlerized texts' of Mrs. Hawthorne's edition (1868-71) to the original manuscripts, of which they reproduce paragraphing, punctuation, and spelling with such conscientious observance that on the infrequent lapses we are left in doubt whether we have a misprint or a slip of Hawthorne's own not followed by the customary (*sic*).<sup>1</sup> There are enough and not too many elucidatory notes at the end. As for the two parts of the Introduction, *Mrs. Hawthorne's Revisions of the English Notebooks* and *Hawthorne in England*, they say what is necessary and say it clearly. Mrs. Hawthorne's excisions, rather than revisions, were sometimes justifiable, as when they removed or obscured references to the living, but they were more often due to an anxious care for her husband's reputation. His own words must not be allowed to give ill-wishers an opportunity to represent him as fond of a cigar, though he was, or enjoying 'Hop-champagne' (or ordinary champagne either) and 'Arch-deacon', and there must be a toning down of his vigorous descriptions of sordid sights and what appeared to her an occasional indelicate phrase. Feet and legs generally must be referred to obliquely, and even chairs may not have bottoms.

There is not much to add to the editor's analysis of Hawthorne's attitude to England, yet an English reader may be allowed to make some remarks. Hawthorne was deplorably homesick for much of the time; he came, as we all do to all strange places, with preconceptions, which with him were for various reasons chiefly unfavourable, and he was prone, as we all are, to generalize widely and rashly on his first visit to foreign parts. 'A fortnight, and some odd days, since we arrived', he noted on 4 August, but this short residence did not prevent him from noting on 6 August that Dr. Bowring was 'not exactly a gentleman; and, indeed, what Englishman is?' and on 24 September, 'the women of England are—'. Well, we all do it, but it is a little surprising that Hawthorne, with his keen and subtle mind, was not more on his guard against this human weakness. His mind was, indeed, perhaps too keen, too much alive to possible and unintended condescension, though he undoubtedly met with some which was exactly paralleled by his own description of the girl at Eastham who was 'very neat, intelligent, and comely—almost as much so as a New England girl' (p. 58), or his remark that the vessels in the Thames were not so fine as those in the Mersey, 'which I attribute to there being fewer Americans, and less influence of American example' (p. 216). One is reminded of Richard Lovell Edgeworth's little son, who shocked Rousseau by similar nationalistic prejudice. The most ironic of Hawthorne's comparisons is between the 'polish' and 'gentlemanliness' of English and Americans, which was retorted on him by his victims in a manner not too creditable to them. It is dangerous to intervene in such an ungracious debate, yet

<sup>1</sup> E.g., p. 433, middle, 'freesone' for 'freestone' and 'town' for 'tower'; p. 567, middle, 'with' for 'which'.

one cannot but be again mildly surprised, after reading Hawthorne's repeated complaints of want of 'gentlemanliness', to find him recording this incident of a visit to a workhouse: 'In another room, there was an old lady alone, and reading; a respectable-looking, intelligent old soul, with rather more refined manners than the others; so I took off my hat in her room' (p. 274). Apart from the question of gentlemanliness, this looks uncommonly like an example of that class distinction for which Hawthorne was always on the watch in English life. Yet the amusing passage on baronets and their presumed, and highly unlikely, sense of inferiority towards earls (p. 54) is balanced by the picture of the self-sufficient, in fact aristocratically indifferent, tramp (p. 41) and oyster-eating labourer (p. 50). It is worthy of notice that the criticisms became gentler, the whole tone mellowed, as the four years of Hawthorne's sojourn passed: he was less ready to suppose that he or his country was being patronized or insulted through envy or hatred; he had seen more of England and more varieties of English life and could make more allowance for differences of convention; he had added to his experience both of humanity and of artistic matters. He was essentially honest and fair-minded, and he was in a position where fairness was singularly difficult. This faithful record shows him to be a more admirable as well as a much more likeable figure than the earlier imperfect editions made him.

EDITH C. BATHO.

**A Sheaf of Studies.** By E. K. CHAMBERS. London: Oxford University Press, 1942. Pp. viii + 157. 10s. net.

This book contains a miscellaneous collection of short studies by the distinguished author of *The Medieval Stage*, *The Elizabethan Stage*, and *William Shakespeare*, written at various dates between 1896 and 1942. There are two essays on Matthew Arnold, two on George Meredith, one on Mrs. Meynell, one on Coleridge, three on general literary subjects and two on topics connected with Oxford. All these essays and addresses have appeared in print, except the two short studies of George Meredith's poetry written nearly half a century ago. It is hard to guess why Sir Edmund has chosen to print these two essays now, at any rate in their present form. They are short pieces of expository criticism, which might have served as a useful introduction to Meredith's poetry for readers of the 'nineties. At present it seems strange to read a discussion of 'Mr. Meredith's' poetry in relation to the question of the vacant laureateship. Moreover, the two studies overlap slightly and the paragraph dealing with *Modern Love* in the second essay repeats the gist of the first in a condensed form.

The essays on Matthew Arnold are more interesting. Here Sir Edmund is in his element among the minutiae of literary history with an Oxfordshire background. In a study of 'Matthew Arnold's Tree' (the Tree of *Thyrsis*) he makes out a good case for supposing it to have been 'a magnificent elm with widely spreading branches which stood alone in the midst of cornfields, on a high slope . . . between Cumnor Village and Chawley Farm'. A sketch map would have been useful as an illustration of this essay, and it is to be hoped that Sir Edmund may one day give us an edition of Arnold's Oxford poems with a map and a detailed topographical introduction. Another essay, on 'The Poetry of Matthew Arnold', was enjoyed by those who read it as a Warton Lecture to the British Academy. It is a delicate piece of appreciation, especially valuable for the comparison of Arnold's thought with Wordsworth's. Here again there is an overlap which a

little revision could have remedied. The last paragraph of this essay is little more than a summary of the preceding essay on the Tree. The study of 'Some Dates in Coleridge's *Annus Mirabilis*' is a learned discussion of the chronology of the composition of Coleridge's major poems, illustrated by copious quotations from Coleridge's letters and Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals. In an Addendum the text of a hitherto unprinted note from a notebook found by the Rev. G. H. B. Coleridge is now transcribed and published for the first time. It throws a little light on the difficult question of the date of the composition of *Kubla Khan*.

Perhaps the most attractive pages in the book are to be found in the fine address on 'The Study of English Literature', now happily rescued from the obscurity of a school-book published by Messrs. Blackie and Sons in 1896. It contains wise and timely words:

We read the very greatest books in our schools, but we read them in the wrong spirit, not for the wisdom and beauty which they contain, but only as so much raw material for lessons in philology and grammar. So that you may have a student of Vergil who is quite familiar with all the Greek constructions in the *Aeneid*, and entirely ignorant as to why the writer persistently calls Aeneas 'pious', or how that epithet is to be reconciled with the hero's conduct towards Dido; and a student of *Hamlet*, who would be quite prepared to write a page on the possible meanings of a 'dram of eale', but would be sorely gruelled if you thought of asking him why Hamlet was so exceedingly disrespectful to the venerable Polonius.

Teachers of English would do well to ponder carefully the stress laid by Sir Edmund on the historical approach to the study of literature, and also his warning against the danger of regarding this approach as the only one. Among the other essays the most delightful is certainly 'Ghosts in the Bodleian', at once a miniature history of an institution which is itself part of the history of England and Europe, and also a sensitive piece of imaginative prose.

The proof-readers of the Oxford University Press have overlooked a bad misprint on l. 24 of p. 71, where 'in' should certainly be read for 'is'.

V. DE SOLA PINTO.

**The Oxford Companion to American Literature.** By JAMES D. HART. London, New York, and Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1941. Pp. viii+888. \$5.00; 28s. net.

For this large and valuable volume we owe a debt of thanks to Mr. Hart and the Oxford University Press. It was, Mr. Hart tells us, 'designed to serve as a useful companion for students and general readers of American literature', and it is soon clear that Mr. Hart has successfully accomplished his design.

For English readers the special usefulness of such a work needs no emphasizing. Here the English reader who is curious about American literature—and we hope there are many such—can find biographies and bibliographies of American authors, together with many summaries of important individual works. The list includes Miss Stein as well as Jonathan Edwards; Hemingway, Farrell, and Dos Passos as well as Parkman, Emerson, and Hawthorne. The reader can, if he wishes, find summaries of *Little Women* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (but not of that tearful classic *The Wide, Wide World*) as well as of *Moby Dick*, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, or *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. There are also articles on such themes as Romanticism, Realism, and Naturalism from the point



of view of their importance in American writing. And we can also find out about the Little Magazine and that once burning topic, the New Humanism, and so on.

Naturally one can cavil at certain points of interpretation or detail. One may, for example, wonder whether the blunt statement that Mr. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* 'was published in 1930 as a profession of his faith in the Church of England' is an altogether felicitously designed sign-post to that poem (we may note that in the article on Mr. Eliot *Gerontion* should read *Gerontion*). Or whether it is of much use to note that the work of Professor Kittredge 'has had a profound influence on American scholarship' without indicating in what directions his influence has led—especially as voices reach us from America to-day which, in no soft whispers, deplore the influence of Professor Kittredge and his school. One may also wonder whether, for example, Mr. Hart's summary of *The Awkward Age*, though bravely done, has much to do with what is interesting and important in that difficult novel.

From the names of some of the works already mentioned, it will have appeared that Mr. Hart catches in his capacious net more than works of 'pure literature'. Mr. Hart has set out 'to deal with the American mind and the American scene, as these are reflected in and influenced by American literature'. He has 'constantly kept in mind the idea that the understanding of works of literature depends upon an informed knowledge of the entire social atmosphere of their place and time'. So we have articles on Carnegie and Rockefeller, William Randolph Hearst and Miss Helen Hayes (why Miss Hayes—and why not on Mr. Walter Winchell or Professor Reinhold Niebuhr?). We can get the Adams family straight in our minds for once, and find out about the Monroe doctrine, the Frontier, the New Deal, the position of Jews in America, Unitarianism and Sacco and Vanzetti, as well as about such—to the English reader at least—obscure topics as, say, the Patroons and the anti-rent war, an understanding of which is necessary for the comprehension of much of Fenimore Cooper's work as a critic of the way American civilization was going in his day. All this is of the first importance for the English reader in these days when it is essential that we should get to know as much as we can about the growth and nature of the American world.

A word of warning must be sounded. This book does not provide especially for the advanced student of American literature, though he will always find it helpful. To do so was not Mr. Hart's aim. His bibliographies do not record the great amount of work, scholarly and interpretative, done in the last twenty years by American scholars and critics in an endeavour to reevaluate their literary tradition (though many of the writers concerned have separate articles devoted to them). And even if Mr. Hart had done this the difficulty of getting hold of the material would remain to harass us. In how many libraries can we consult *American Literature* or the files of *The Hound and the Horn*, to go no farther afield? And if, shall we say, some one wanted to take a W.E.A. class on 'American life in American Literature' and wished to use the lumberjack tales clustering round the legendary figures of Paul Bunyan in the North and Tony Beaver in the South, or to discuss the historical and sociological background of that great mythological figure, the Cowboy, how easy would he find it to get the necessary sources?

D. J. GORDON.

**Avrupa Edebiyatı Ve Biz** (European Literature and Ourselves). By İSMAIL HABİB. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi. 2 vols., vol. I. (1940), pp. xiv+575; vol. II. (1941) pp. 635. Lt. 2.00 per vol.

This work does three things: (1) it presents a survey of Greco-Roman culture to Turks, whose tradition is Islamic; (2) it lists Turkish translations from ancient and modern European languages; and (3) it expounds the part played by Islam and the Turks in the development of modern European culture. There are flaws which might be expected in the hasty printing of over a thousand pages but it is a useful book.

English poetry comes out badly: no translations are recorded of Chaucer, Spenser, Donne, Milton, Pope, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Browning, or Swinburne. Novels fare better: *Robinson Crusoe* has been translated eight times between 1870 and 1938; *Gulliver's Travels* three times between 1872 and 1935; none of the great novelists of the eighteenth century has been translated, but Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray appear, and *Alis' in Sergüzeşleri* is *Alice's Adventures*, 1932. Wilde, Kipling, Wells, and Shaw share twelve pages in a list of translations. Of these, Wilde gets eight pages, Kipling gets three pages, Wells gets just a full page, and Shaw gets less than half a page. Miscellaneous fiction and children's books get five pages of bare catalogue without description, which means that they have been the most frequently translated books.

There is room for a similar bibliographical treatment of translations from Turkish into western tongues. Dr. Habib mentions *Nassir-eddin Hoja* (Nasreddin Hoca), but does not reveal that the best collection of these very Turkish and very charming stories is an English translation of 1922.

**İngiliz Edebiyatı Tarihi—Başlangıçtan Elizabet Devrine Kadar** (History of English Literature—from the origins to the age of Elizabeth). By HALİDE EDİB. İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Nesriyatından No. 185. İstanbul, Kenan Basımevi ve Kış Fabrikası. 1940. Pp. 328. Lt. 1.50.

Professor Halide Edib is best known to the English public as a novelist and as the author of indiscreetly frank memoirs of the foundation of the present régime in Turkey. This first instalment of her history of English literature establishes her rank as a scholar.

In its main lines her history follows the standard authorities. It is distinguished (1) by its frequent, long, and original translations from old authors and modern critics, and (2) by the illuminating consciousness of similarity between the England of Elizabeth and the Turkey of İnönü. For English readers the second point is the more interesting, and it might have been more interesting still, to Turks as well as English, if the Elizabethan critics had been more often cited. Many of them were poets as well as critics, and most of them know what the poets were thinking about and trying to do.

The present volume carries the history to the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, but little further. Surrey and Wyatt appear, but not Spenser; *Gorboduc* (spelled and indexed as *Garboduc*) and *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, but not Marlowe or Shakespeare. It will disappoint English readers as well as Turks if Bayan Halide, who has translated *Hamlet* into Turkish and secured for it a longer run than any play has ever had in İstanbul, does not write on Shakespeare.

## SHORT NOTICES

**The Lone Shieling: Origin and Authorship of the Blackwood 'Canadian Boat-Song'.** By G. H. NEEDLER. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1941. Pp. xii+109. 8s. 6d. net.

The purpose of this book is to show that D. M. Moir wrote the celebrated boat-song and that he was inspired by John Galt's work for the Canada Company. This is really an essay padded out to make a book. More than half of the material has nothing to do with the probability or improbability of Moir's authorship. For example, several pages are devoted to an account of the difference between quantitative and accentual verse merely because Moir wrote some poems in Sapphics. The argument, when reduced to essentials, rests on the following points: Moir's intimacy with Galt and his interest in Galt's Canadian activities, the fact that Moir was a frequent contributor to Blackwood's at the time the song appeared (1829), reference to exiles from Scotland in some of Moir's poems, the metrical form of the song, and verbal similarities between Moir's poems and the song. Professor Needler thinks the metrical argument alone pretty well proves his case, but the four poems in sapphic metre by Moir which he quotes differ from the boat-song in being unrhymed and in having a short fourth line. The verbal similarities he finds 'striking' and 'significant', but in reality they are nearly all trivial and commonplace. Moir may have written the song, but Professor Needler is far from proving that he did.

R. K. GORDON.

**Edgar Allan Poe: The Raven and Other Poems.** With an Introduction by Thomas Ollive Mabbott. New York: Columbia University Press. 1942. For the Facsimile Text Society; London: H. Milford. Pp. xxviii+91. 12s. net.

*The Raven and Other Poems*, published on 19 November 1845, in Wiley and Putnam's 'Library of American Books' was the fourth and last of the volumes of verse that Poe published in his lifetime. The Facsimile Text Society has already published reproductions of the three earlier volumes, and now, under the care of Mr. Thomas Ollive Mabbott, gives us the last and most popular. The copy reproduced is the 'Lorimer Graham copy', that is, the copy which belonged to Poe himself, and to which he added manuscript revisions. Mr. Mabbott contributes a lucid and valuable bibliographical introduction—in which he discusses, among other topics, the textual history of *Al Aaraaf*, which has been obscured by Poe's mystifications ('the one with which we quizzed the Bostonians'), which had their source in his desire to show that he lisped in numbers ere the numbers came. Scholars concerned with the text of Poe will obviously find it necessary to use this volume.

Mr. Mabbott says that *The Raven and other Poems* included a large proportion of the poetry on which Poe's fame was to rest. True; but a re-reading of these poems only leads to the fresh realization of how bad a poet Poe was and how remarkable it is that his reputation should have lasted so long. Professor Winters in his trenchant and admirable essay on Poe (included in *Maule's Curse*, 1938) recorded his surprise at finding that Poe was still considered to be a great poet—a feeling that the present writer shares to the full. *The Raven* itself is as absurd as ever, *Lenore* just as rhythmically blatant, *The Conqueror Worm* as pretentious, and the tenuousities of *Al Aaraaf* as tiresome. Nor is it possible to agree with Mr. Mabbott that Poe's revisions, as recorded here, 'are all highly significant of Poe's careful artistry'. It is difficult to see any good reason why Poe should have revised the last stanza of *Lenore*—or why angels should tend to become seraphs. Poe's interest lies in his exemplification of the *reductio ad absurdum* of certain Romantic assumptions about the nature of poetry and the poet, and in his influence on a poet greater than himself.

D. J. GORDON.

## SUMMARY OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

BY ALICE WALKER

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*Comedies, Tragi-Comedies, with other Poems* by Mr. William Cartwright (1651): a bibliographical study (Gwynne B. Evans), pp. 12-22.

A. E. Housman, an annotated check-list: additions and corrections (William White), pp. 31-44.

A further note on Milton's *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (Clarissa O. Lewis), pp. 45-7.

### MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES, Vol. 57, No. 7, November 1942—

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### MODERN LANGUAGE REVIEW, Vol. 37, No. 4, October 1942—

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The development of a stock character: the stage Irishman to 1800 (J. O. Bartley), pp. 438-47.

The Gothic short story in the Magazines (Robert D. Mayo), pp. 448-54.

The hoard of the Nibelungs (Hilda R. Ellis), pp. 466-79.

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Lamb on revisions: an uncollected letter (John H. Birss), p. 286.

A letter of 10 January 1831 to Lamb's publishers.



## NOTES AND QUERIES, Vol. 182, November 21—

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## TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, August 1—

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Richard Edwards, publisher (T. W. Hanson), p. 396.

## August 29—

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A query ('Miss Braddon and Garibaldi') from Sir Ian MacAlister and reply from Montague Summers, September 26, p. 480. Further correspondence (on the 1861 edition of *The Trail of the Serpent*) from Michael Sadleir, October 10, p. 504; another note from Montague Summers, October 24, p. 528.

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## — October 10—

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A line in *As You Like It* (B. H. Newdigate), p. 550.

On 'meanes' ('waues'?) in II. vii. 73.

John Dicks, Publisher (Montague Summers), p. 552.

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## TURNBULL LIBRARY RECORD, No. 2, July 1940—

Marginalia by E. B. B.: Milton's Prose Works (C. R. H. T.), pp. 5-7.

Notes in the Turnbull volumes of Miller's 1809 edition.

Some Landor Letters to J. E. Fitzgerald (A. G. B.), pp. 8-10.

Matthew Arnold and an Australian admirer (Ian A. Gordon), pp. 11-2.

## — No. 3, January 1941—

A Shenstone discovery (Ian A. Gordon), pp. 11-4.

A brief account of a Shenstone MS. (formerly owned by Percy) identified with his projected *Miscellany*.

## — No. 4, July-December 1941—

An unrecorded copy of Chatterton (Ian A. Gordon), pp. 6-9.

A copy of the third edition, rebound for Catcott, with copious documentary evidence in support of the authenticity of the Rowley poems.

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